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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 25, 1985

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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 1985

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2261, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dale E. Kildee (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Kildee, Tauke, and Petri.

Staff present: Susan Wilhelm, staff director; S. Jefferson McFarland, legislative counsel; Thomas M. Kelley, clerk; and Carol Lamb, minority associate.

Mr. KILDEE. The subcommittee will come to order.

The Subcommittee on Human Resources convenes this morning for an oversight hearing on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

I have often stated that you can judge a society by how it cares for its very young and its very old—those who are the most vulnerable in our society. Runaway and homeless youth are clearly among the most vulnerable of children. In testimony before the subcommittee at an earlier hearing, 1st Lt. Richard Schoenberger of the Michigan State Police pointed out that most children who leave their homes are not running to any place. Rather they are running away from something. As a result, they find themselves on the street without resources or shelter and are at great risk of exploitation.

It was in response to a growing concern over the need to help such children and their families that the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act was first enacted in 1974. The funds authorized under the act have provided the impetus for a nationwide system of shelters serving runaway and homeless youth. According to a 1983 report by the Department of Health and Human Services' inspector general, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act has the distinction of being viewed as one of the best programs in the Federal Government.

Recent debate on the problem of missing children has highlighted the need for adequate support systems for children. By most counts, runaways comprise the largest percentage of missing children. Given that runaway shelters provide an effective support system for children and their families, the subcommittee is also interested in the relationship between, and coordination among, runaway and missing children services. It is important that the public

perception of the need to assist runaways does not diminish because these children are away from home but have not been abducted.

I would like to welcome all of our witnesses this morning. We appreciate your concern and your cooperation. In addition to the witnesses present today, the subcommittee invited Alfred S. Regnery, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to testify. Mr. Regnery has recently authored several articles expressing concern over the treatment of runaways, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has published a bulletin on this topic. While Mr. Regnery is unable to attend this morning, he will submit a statement for inclusion in the hearing record.

Our first witness this morning—we appreciate her presence here—is Ms. Dodie Livingston, Commissioner, Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, of the Department of Health and Human Services.

We welcome you here this morning.

STATEMENT OF DODIE LIVINGSTON, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're delighted to be here.

If I could take just a second, I'd like to introduce the two people who are at the table with me. Mrs. Paget Wilson Hinch, who's the new Associate Commissioner at ACFY. Her area is Family and Youth Services Bureau. And she was only just brought into our Bureau officially as of last Friday. So, we're delighted to have Paget with us.

Mr. KILDEE. Welcome here and welcome aboard the Department.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Paget is the runaway person.

And, on my right, Dr. Dominic Mastrapasqua, who has been the Acting Associate Commissioner, and now is the Deputy Associate, in what we call FYSB, Family and Youth Services. And Dom has a long history of work in the Runaway Program. So, I'm very proud to have them with me this morning.

We have submitted my testimony, the full paper, for the record. And what I would like to do, if it would be OK with you, is share a shorter version, knowing that you are pressed for time this morning.

Mr. KILDEE. That will be fine. Your entire statement will be included in the record. You can shorten it in any fashion you wish.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. OK.

In 1973, the Secretary of the then Department of Health, Education, and Welfare established an Intra-Departmental Committee on Runaway Youth because of national concerns about runaways, the escalating numbers of delinquency cases in juvenile courts, and the determination of the Senate Judiciary Committee to develop an alternative to jail for status offenders.

The following year, the Congress established the Runaway Youth Program under title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1977, the legislation was broadened to

include the homeless youth. And, in 1980, it was changed to include a State allocation based on youth populations in each of the States.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act provides funds for community-based centers to meet the needs of runaway and homeless young people and their families, including such services as temporary shelter, counseling, and the all important after care.

These centers are to operate outside of the law enforcement and juvenile justice systems.

Let me give you an example which illustrates the strong ties which our programs have with other service systems, such as, law enforcement and the medical communities, and which typifies the Runaway and Homeless Youth Services Program and system.

Kathy, a 16-year-old, first came to the attention of the Sanctuary, a center in Royal Oak, MI, in September 1984. She had run away three times before and had been living with a 22-year-old boyfriend in a motel for 2 weeks. It is believed that the boyfriend was actually a pimp and that she also was using drugs, cocaine, when she was picked up by the police.

The police gave her the option of going to the Juvenile Detention or to the Sanctuary Program. And, fortunately, for Kathy, she selected going to the Sanctuary.

Prior to entering there, she had had a very stormy relationship in her home with her folks. She would come home from school and go sequester herself in her room. And, then, at night, she would sneak out by herself.

Part of the problem was the fact that her younger brother was disabled. And although that was certainly no fault of his, it took an awful lot of her parents' time, and she received very little attention from them.

She stayed at the Sanctuary for the full 14 days that was allowable under the law. And she was a real problem at the center, a serious behavior problem.

But, then, 1 day, she had an intensive 4 hour counseling session with a staff counsellor and her boyfriend. During this session, it came out what her boyfriend's real motivations were. And Kathy was able to begin to see what was going on in her life.

When it was time for her to leave the program, she got very depressed. And they put her in the hospital for 3 weeks. But after her hospitalization, she participated in the after program at the Sanctuary for another 6 months.

Today, we have a success story. Kathy is a young woman with a positive direction in life. The relationship with her family, particularly her mother, has improved greatly. She recently completed writing a booklet on her hospital experience for other potential youthful clients. She is presently an active volunteer at the Sanctuary and has recently been nominated to be a member of that program's board of directors.

I know you must be proud of her, Congressman. It's a wonderful story.

To foster and encourage success stories like Kathy's, we are now funding 274 runaway and homeless youth centers. I am pleased to report that we now support such centers in every jurisdiction and most major communities, most major cities in the country.

The total appropriation for 1985 fiscal year for our program was $23.2 million. Of this amount, a little over $18.1 million, or 78 percent, was awarded to the 274 local centers.

These centers provide temporary shelter for runaway and homeless youth, counseling on a dropin basis for troubled youth, and counseling and other services for youth and their families.

Another $718,000 of the Government's money that we're passing out is being awarded for support of 12 coordinated networks, which serve the entire country. And their purpose is to enable the centers we fund to work together, to help each other, to share their ideas and experiences, and to strengthen what they're doing.

Also, through the Office of Human Development Services and the Coordinate Discretionary Program, which we have, nearly $3.5 million have been awarded for 33 different research and demonstration projects. These projects include four on independent living, five on youth employment, six on physical and sexual abuse of runaways, four projects for chronic runaways, five projects on shelter linkages to missing children program, two projects on volunteer networks for runaway and homeless youth services, and seven projects on suicide prevention in runaway shelters.

The National Runaway Switchboard, a toll free hotline, has been awarded $350,000 under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

To give you a more complete view of the program that we administer, I will use data from fiscal year 1984, because that's the last year for which we have current and complete figures. And this information is taken from the 1984 annual report, which we send up to the Congress through the Department. It was submitted on July 11.

During fiscal year 1984, runaway and homeless youth centers funded under the act provided shelter for an estimated 60,500 young people.

Youth receiving crisis intervention and other services on a dropin basis were estimated at about 245,000 young people, which totals 305,500 kids who received residential or walkin services last year.

Fortunately, about 80 percent of the youth receiving services were reunited with their families, or their guardians, or placed in other positive living arrangements. Thirteen percent were placed in stable living situations, such as group homes. And only 7 percent—although we all know that's 7 percent too many—were returned to the streets after receiving center services.

We continued to support the National Runaway Switchboard, which, this year, also began to serve as the National Adolescent Suicide Hotline. It provides referral. Well, last year, it provided referral and crisis intervention services to about 250,000 runaway and homeless youth and their families.

In fiscal year 1984, we also awarded 35 discretionary grants to a wide range of projects to provide innovative strategies for addressing the needs of runaway and homeless youths and their families, including the prevention of runaway behavior.

Seventy-six centers were visited by our regional ACYF staff last year for intensive onsite reviews. An equal number are scheduled for review this year. These onsite reviews examine each of the 13 program performance standards to be sure that centers are carry-

ing out the purpose of the act and living up to their obligations under their grants and the rules that they have agreed to abide by.

These highlights will give you some feel for how we are managing out responsibilities in implementing the act.

We realize that runaway behavior and homelessness among youth continue to be a major problem in the United States. And I might add, parenthetically, that we also realize that so much of this goes back to the condition that our families are in across America. And, as you know, that's another responsibility we have in ACFY, to try to help strengthen families in this country.

In our regulations, we define a runaway youth as a person under 18 years of age who absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of parents or legal guardians.

We estimate that the number of runaway youth aged 10 to 17 in this country, today, is more than one million youngsters. Only approximations have been available for the number of homeless kids. The regulations define a homeless youth as a person under 18 who is in need of services and without a place of shelter where he or she receives supervision and care. And we estimate that approximately 35 percent, or about 100,000 of the youths receiving services under our program, are homeless.

Others estimate that, nationally, the number of homeless youth each year is approximately 500,000. And, as you know, it's a very difficult number to get a hard fix on.

The services of the centers we fund are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Because we serve youth and families who are hurting, an immediate response is necessary, and our shelter staff are dedicated to providing that service immediately.

Recently, the head counsel at Briarpatch, one of our programs in Madison, WI, received a weekend call from a distraught mother whose 14-year-old daughter had just been brought home by the police.

Kim had been away from home for 14 days and, at that moment, was preparing to leave again. The counselor spoke with Kim on the phone and persuaded her and her parents to come in immediately for crisis intervention counseling.

When they arrived at Briarpatch, the counselor explained the services offered and then met with Kim and her parents separately.

Kim felt that she didn't have enough freedom. She was afraid she was pregnant. And she felt rejected by her father, with whom, previously, she had been very close.

At that time, until about 2 years ago, at which time her father had started abusing alcohol and drugs and ceased to be as important a factor in the family because he wasn't able to give support to his family.

Kim's parents felt that she was out of control. And, at that point, they were not working together to iron out all the difficulties that they were having with her.

At the end of this initial session, Kim refused to go home and was placed in Briarpatch's emergency shelter. Later, she attempted suicide while at her boyfriend's house. Her boyfriend immediately called the shelter, which, in turn, notified her parents and called

the poison control center. It was determined, fortunately, that the pills Kim took would only make her dizzy and sick to her stomach.

This incident brought her parents closer and reaffirmed their commitment to improving their family life. Kim has returned home and her family is attending weekly counseling. And Briarpatch is very optimistic about their prospects.

I would like to turn briefly to the National Runaway Switchboard and Adolescent Suicide Hotline. Both of these services are provided under a grant to Metro-Help, Inc., of Chicago. The Switchboard, we are proud to say, was recently mentioned quite favorably by Ann Landers in her column. So, of course, that spread the word a little bit more.

The system is designed to provide information, referral, and counseling services to youth and their families nationwide. The Switchboard serves as a toll free, neutral channel of communication, allowing youth contemplating suicide or leaving home to receive crisis counseling and referral services.

Runaway and homeless youth can receive similar services or contact their parents while away from home. Similarly, parents can use the system to contact their children through an intermediary, trained, volunteer counselor.

Since its inception, the Switchboard has provided services to more than 2 million callers. In the first year of operation, 1975, the Switchboard received approximately 11,000 calls. In fiscal year 1984, they received approximately 250,000 calls. So, they certainly have improved what they are able to do.

The Switchboard operates 24 hours a day, year round, and employs 9 full-time paid staff, 5 to 15 part-time employes, and approximately 200 volunteers. Each of the volunteers receives at least 40 hours of intensive training before he or she is put on the Switchboard by his or herself.

Of the approximately 250,000 callers who contacted the Switchboard this year, 53 percent were referred to services within their community, and almost 20 percent of the youth callers used the services to contact their families through the message delivery component. More than half of the youth callers were runaways who had been away from home for from 4 to 7 days. Over 40 percent received crisis intervention counseling from the volunteer counselors.

And, in addition, each month the Switchboard handles over 2,000 calls which are potential suicides or similar high stress situations.

About a year ago, we received a letter from Amy, a 17-year-old, on the west coast, who said she had nowhere to live, could not return home, and was desperate. She had written to President Reagan, and the White House immediately referred the letter to us.

We called the Switchboard. And with just the phone number of an acquaintance to go on, they located her, saw to her immediate needs by getting her into a runaway center, and then followed up to see that she received assistance in finding a job and, ultimately, an apartment with a roommate.

The Switchboard and the shelters provide young people with counseling and information services in a neutral, helpful manner,

which may prevent them from leaving home or participating in antisocial behavior.

I have given you facts and figures on the national dimensions of this program. These figures, however, do not adequately represent the impact of the services on the lives of our young people and their families. And I want to share one more story which we heard about recently and I think describes the depth of our impact on individual lives.

Running away from his rural hometown, Jeff, who was 17, ended up in the seamy section of Des Moines—Iowa's largest urban setting. I hope there's nobody here from Des Moines.

Prior to this runaway episode, he had been sent to live with an aunt and uncle as a way to alleviate the conflicts with his parents at home. Rebelling against the traditional values and mores of his farm family, he was acting out his frustrations by doing such things as letting his hair grow long and dyeing it, shall we say, unusual colors.

Living on the streets of Des Moines, where he was exposed to exploitation, he was spotted by one of the Youth and Shelter Services' outreach counselors. Part of the counselor's responsibility is to do detached street work in areas frequented by youth.

It was quite obvious to the counselor that Jeff was very ill. He agreed to accompany the counselor to the program where his medical needs were attended to first. Jeff had both a serious viral infection and VD of the throat. He was then placed in the emergency shelter.

During his 14-day stay, his parents came in for family counseling. After 14 days, he was able to return home. And he and his family continued out-client counseling for a year.

Today, Jeff is attending junior college and is living at home. He has progressed in his life.

I would like to add, if I may, one more subject. I'd like to expand a little bit on the youth suicide issue. As you may know, as part of our grants, this year, we have funded projects which will enable our shelter people to develop training techniques for their staff, when young people come in in a depressed state of mind, so that these people can help these kids right away.

This was requested by our shelter staff and we have developed this over the last year.

Also, in response to that need and, frankly, the statistics that we're all reading about, we conducted a conference in June with the Action agency on the youth suicide issue. We brought in experts from all over the country, had over 500 people attending, young people, parents, teachers, educators, social workers, you know, the whole gamut of people who are interested in this field.

We feel we had a very successful conference. And now we're trying to lay out our plans to follow up on the material and the information which was shared.

As you also know, Secretary Heckler has appointed a departmentwide task force on youth suicide. And the task force under the direction of Dr. Shervert Frazier of NIMH is actively meeting and we hope to have a report ready at the end of fiscal year 1986.

I'd like to share, in closing, two or three very brief vignettes.

Eleven-year-old Becky swallowed an entire bottle of aspirin. She said she did it because she didn't have anything to live for since she had just lost her best friend.

After several months of erratic eating and sleeping, Becky tried again. And this time she died.

Nineteen-year-old Gerald hanged himself. He was a straight A student in high school. But he killed himself after the first semester of college when he got his first B and was no longer at the top of his class.

Sixteen-year-old Greg put a hose to his car's exhaust pipe. He left a note expressing his love for his family and asking their forgiveness because he could never live up to their expectations.

Eighteen-year-old Perry ran away from home often. He got into trouble with the police. He drank a lot and he skipped classes. He was angry. And everyone seemed to be angry at him. He shot himself soon after having been confronted with stealing money from his parents.

Six-year-old—that's 6-year-old Aaron—rode his bicycle or tricycle into the street as a car approached. In the hospital, afterward, he told the doctor he had thought he would be in heaven and was sorry that he wasn't.

And, from a personal standpoint, I could add that 40-year-old Malcolm Truman became despondent over his job and his family problems. He shot himself twice with a stolen .22-caliber handgun, leaving a wife and four children. He also left a sister. And that's me. And I can—excuse me. I can tell you that this is a very devastating problem. And when it hits in our communities or our families, it hurts in a way that I don't think anyone ever gets over.

So, as you and we work to help children, we must be mindful also of the youth suicide issue.

Congressman, we appreciate your concern and we are very pleased to be able to testify with you today. If you have any questions, I'd be delighted to answer them.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Is the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families in regular consultation with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yes, we are. We serve as a member of the OJJDP Committee. In fact, several of our staff people regularly go to those meetings. And we are in very close contact with Al and his staff. So, I feel we have a very close relationship.

Mr. KILDEE. I would encourage that. Because very often, in Government, the bigger it gets, the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing even though they are serving the same people. I certainly would encourage that type of consultation since we are trying to serve those people out there.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention published a bulletin recently entitled "Runaway Children and the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act: What is the Impact?" Was your office provided any opportunity for input into that document?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. I don't believe so.

Mr. KILDEE. OK. Again, I think what we try to do is take what's going well and try to improve it. I would think this might be an example where opportunities for consultation need to be enhanced between the two agencies. I raise the question for that purpose.

In a recent letter to the Administrator of the OJJDP, I urged the Office to consult with your Department regarding their proposed missing children's incidence study so that the data will have the greatest utility.

Has there been any consultation yet or input from your agency on that?

Mr. MASTRAPASQUA. Yes, sir, there has been. And we are continuing to work with Mr. Regnery's staff discussing the pros and cons of tying in more specifically to hotlines, sharing information, ensuring that the figures that everybody is using clearly reflect what we think is real. And it's an ongoing dialog.

Mr. KILDEE. That's encouraging. And if we can do anything to help facilitate that consultation back and forth, we certainly want to do that. I think you realize, and your testimony reflects, that we're not in an adversary position here, we're trying to serve the same people.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yeah. We feel exactly the same way.

Mr. KILDEE. I can tell that from your testimony and your attitude here this morning.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Could I insert one thought here?

As you probably know, this is International Youth Year 1985, proclaimed by the President here and in the U.N. internationally. We have an interagency task force, which is made up of representatives from virtually all the departments of the Government. And ACFY has the honor to serve as the chair of that.

But it has provided us with a really wonderful opportunity to talk about what we're doing. And although our focus is highlighting particular youth activites this year and highlighting the needs of youth, we've really had a neat time learning what each other is doing, and really talking about continuing the dialog after 1985 is over.

So, I think that's another example of what you're concerned about—all of us talking to each other.

Mr. KILDEE. Very good. I'm glad to hear that.

The Department awarded 274 basic grants in fiscal year 1985, and that was a 9-percent increase over the fiscal year 1984 level. The number of basic grants funded in 1984 was a 16-percent increase over fiscal year 1983.

How many basic grants do you anticipate you will award in fiscal year 1986?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Well, we've asked for level funding. We've anticipated, given the overall situation budgetwise, that's probably what we would get. And I don't know that we anticipate very many additional centers.

Our purpose, as you know, in expanding has been to kind of broaden our reach. And we recognize the problem that in broadening our reach we take away a little bit from the existing shelters. But the idea has always been to encourage them to get as much community support as they can. And most of them do a very fine job of that.

And, so, we have just felt that a little new blood each year was very helpful. And it just—you know, sometimes we find that there is a city that needs something that maybe hasn't had it before. And we've tried to keep that in mind as we've expanded.

Mr. KILDEE. I've been in Government, now, 21 years, and I know how the Office of Management and Budget presses the various agencies in their requests.

But we can't conclude by the fact that the President is asking for level funding in his budget, that we really begin to address the actual need out there. We can't conclude that can we?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Well, I mean, it's sort of a——

Mr. KILDEE. I know. I understand that.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yes.

Mr. KILDEE. I've been in Government a long time and I know——

Ms. LIVINGSTON. You've been in longer than I have.

Mr. KILDEE. OK. But, see, what I'm trying to say here, there's a dialog back and forth, and you are kind of given direction from OMB as to what to request. I am very familiar with that process. I served on the appropriations committee in the State legislature, so I recognize that.

Nevertheless, I think when Dave Stockman tells Cap Weinberger to do that, Cap doesn't do it. That's what I'm saying. And this is not directed at you personally.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yes.

Mr. KILDEE. Because I know this is all through Government. Cap is a very strong advocate for the fiscal needs of his department. He's a very, very strong advocate. I think he is one person who is able to straight-arm Dave Stockman, when Dave Stockman says reduce your request here a bit.

And I guess what I'm saying to you and all agencies heads is that I wish all of us could be infected with whatever Cap Weinberger is infected with in trying to be strong advocates for our own agencies, within the fighting that takes place in the budget process.

Now, of course, I'll never know what input you have had because that's all internal within the executive branch. We try to find out, but it's difficult to do so.

I'm really advocating that every agency head, particularly for those programs that really uphold, promote, defend, and enhance human dignity, they become such a strong advocate that OMB has to back down, as they have done for 5 years now with the Pentagon budget.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Could I respond to that?

Mr. KILDEE. Sure.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. You're a bigger expert than I am at Government kind of stuff. But the difference—one of the differences between us and DOD—and I know Cap from California, and he is a great advocate—is that Defense really is a national issue, and it is the responsibility of the Feds, you know, to fund it at this level because local communities can't buy tanks and howitzers.

The—I think we feel that we are advocating very strongly, but our focus is a little bit different. Where we have tried to put a lot of emphasis is on talking to the private sector. For example, we have arranged this program with—let's see—Continental Trailways and Jack Rabbit Bus Lines, which is out in the Rocky Mountain

States, to provide a free ride home for kids who run away. And we've had—I don't know--8, 10,000 kids have used that service. And, interestingly enough, they don't use it as a turnstile thing. They go home and they usually stay home. I mean, I thought, well, that would be a wonderful way to see America. But it hasn't. You know, it's turned out that it's been used responsibly.

We have talked with truck stops. And they have posters and referral numbers in their truck stops. It's really against the law for truck drivers to pick up runaway kids. But when it happens, we've had a lot of feedback indicating that a lot of these truck drivers are immensely responsible in how they handle it. And there's—I mean, I could just name dozens of things that we've—where we've tried to get the private sector helping.

We've tried to reach out to communities. I had a meeting with some of my staff on—I think it was Wednesday or Tuesday—with a woman who represents a major cosmetics firm in the country. And she's a very—a person who believes very strongly in kids. And I met her at a conference out in California. And we started talking. What could we do together? And she wants to. She works with hair stylists. And she wants to get the hair stylists brought up to speed a little bit on kids issues, so that when they are having their customers in their shops they can maybe provide pamphlets or say, gee, have you thought of calling such-and-such, a local referral center.

And there's just oodles of things like that where we feel we've almost more effective than just pouring more and more Federal dollars in. You know, if we can encourage the locals—and really, if the local people—and I—you know this better than I do. But it just seems like if the local people don't really buy in heavily to their local problems that we're so far away that it's hard for us to really solve all of them.

Mr. KILDEE. Well, I recognize that defense is a national responsibility. But I really think our children are a national responsibility, too. And I think it's very, very important. Morality alone would demand that they be a national responsibility. But even aside from morality the fact is that we're a very mobile society, where within the time that school opens in the morning until school closes in the afternoon, a child can travel or be transported from one end of this country to the other.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. I agree.

Mr. KILDEE. The National and Federal Government, therefore, has responsibilities to those children.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. We do. We do, indeed. And I would not argue that at all.

Mr. KILDEE. No. I know. I know. I know. I think we're——

Ms. LIVINGSTON. We're saying the same thing in a lot of ways.

Mr. KILDEE. You also mentioned that you have to bring in the private sector. Well, I would. And I certainly think that's extremely important. We've done a great deal to do that. Again, I wish that Cap Weinberger would bring in the private sector and tell General Dynamics to cut out its profiteering a bit, you know.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. The President just appointed a committee to do that.

Mr. KILDEE. Right.

Cap paid $21,000 for what's in this envelope there. Twenty-one.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Gee.

Mr. KILDEE. You could buy it for 31 cents. Now, it took two crooks, two dummies, or a crook and a dummy to make that transaction, right?

So, we appeal to the private sector. I wish Cap would bring in General Dynamics and say, "why don't you make some contribution rather than profiteering." I think Dave Stockman knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Children are very valuable.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. I couldn't argue. I agree completely. I have two boys at home and I——

Mr. KILDEE. I know that your concern is very deep and your record is very good, but you happen to be the one before me this morning. I want you to send that back to the other agency heads that there is, first of all, a need for advocacy, strong advocacy with OMB, and the recognition, too, that we do have a very deep national concern, particularly for our children.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. OK.

Mr. KILDEE. OK. I do a little preaching, too.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. You do it very well.

Mr. KILDEE. The budget recommendations or justification mention only one new grant next year for a total of 275 grants. It was 274 last year, and they say 275 on the budget justification. Is that correct? One additional grant?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. You mean our center, our basic center grants?

Mr. KILDEE. Yes.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. I think we've about 20.

Ms. HINCH. There are 20 new ones this year.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Twenty new ones for—that we're funding right now for next year.

Mr. KILDEE. But for fiscal year 1986, you anticipate just one more? The budget justification that I read here is 275 grants.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yes. That's true.

Mr. KILDEE. And you had 274. That's not much growth, is it?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. No.

Mr. KILDEE. All right. Any questions from counsel? Any questions? Go ahead, Carol.

Ms. LAMB. Ms. Livingston, thank you for being here.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Please call me Dodie.

Ms. LAMB. I've asked Congressman Tauke to try to get here as soon as possible. Unfortunately, he is tied up in a markup on another committee right now.

If he were here, I know he would want to ask what the status of the regulations are on the 1984 changes to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, if regulations are being drafted to effect those changes.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. No.

Ms. LAMB. Also, Congressman Tauke is always very concerned about getting accurate numbers, since it's very important to have good statistics on the number of runaway youth we have.

Has the Department or your agency completed any incidence studies on runaways, do you have any planned, or have any discre-

tionary grants been awarded for incidence studies on runaway youth?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. No. We do have, as you probably know, what we call the I Care system, which is a form that goes out to all the centers, and they fill it out. It's done on a—you know, for the because of the constraints on requiring forms, we do it on a voluntary basis. But we get about 70 to 80 percent return with the information. And we have been in the process of kind of retooling that a little bit to simplify it and make the questions more germane to—you know, to what we're seeing and what we think are the problems. And, so, we're about to start using that new form, and we're hoping that that will help.

The centers are motivated to provide the information because they too want the statistics. And we all have kind of the same problem getting them. And, of course, we have nothing except hearsay on the many shelters that we don't fund, which is—what? Two hundred and fifty or so more across the country that are funded locally or by the States.

Ms. LAMB. But the numbers that you receive from the shelters, those are only the runaways that they have contact with?

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Yes.

Ms. LAMB. They're not the——

Ms. LIVINGSTON. The ones that they actually serve.

Ms. LAMB [continuing]. The vast number of others that receive no service.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Receive no service or receive it in other facilities that are not tied up with us.

Ms. LAMB. Thank you.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. OK.

Ms. LAMB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

The chair would like to submit additional questions to you within the next 10 days for inclusion in the record. And one question I would particularly would like to get a response to is one we've tried to get some response to before. It's on the Bilingual-Multicultural Resource Centers.

So, we'll submit that question to you specifically as one of our inquiries.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. OK.

Mr. KILDEE. And we'd appreciate, particularly, a response to that, so we can include it in the record.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Would you like a response on that one separately sooner. I know that's an issue up here.

Mr. KILDEE. If possible. That would be helpful. Yes.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. OK. We can do that.

Mr. KILDEE. OK.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. Thank you very much.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Ms. LIVINGSTON. It's been a real pleasure.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much and your staff.

[Prepared statement of Dodie Livingston follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DODIE T. LIVINGSTON, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Dodie Livingston, Commissioner of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services. Accompanying me are Paget Wilson Hinch, Associate Commissioner, Family and Youth Services Bureau and Dominic Mastrapasqua, Deputy Associate Commissioner. My agency administers the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). I am happy to be here today to provide you with information on the recent activities and accomplishments of the National Runaway and Homeless Youth Program.

The three major aspects of the Program which I will address today are: program operations; program support activities; and the National Runaway Switchboard, our nation-wide crisis hotline service. My testimony will describe the status and accomplishments of the runaway and homeless youth centers funded under the Act and the other activities which support the effective implementation of the law.

In 1973, the Secretary of the then Department of Health, Education and Welfare established an Intra-Departmental Committee on Runaway Youth. This was in response to national concerns about runaways, escalating numbers of delinquency cases brought into juvenile courts throughout the country, and the determination of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee to develop an alternative to jail for status offenders. The following year, Congress established the Runaway Youth Program under Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. In 1977, the legislation was broadened to include homeless youth; and in 1980, the grant funding process was statutorily changed to include a State allocation based on youth population.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act provides funds for community-based programs that primarily serve the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. The Act authorizes grants for such services as temporary shelter, counseling, and aftercare in settings outside the law enforcement and juvenile justice system.

There are a number of examples which illustrate the strong ties our programs have with other service systems such as the law enforcment and medical communities and typify the treatment approaches and positive outcomes of the runaway and homeless youth service system.

Kathy, a 16 year old, first came to the attention of The Sanctuary in Royal Oak, Michigan in September 1984. She had run away 3 times before and had been living with a 22 year old boyfriend in a motel for two weeks. It is believed that the boyfriend was actually a pimp and that she also was using drugs (cocaine) when picked up by the police. The police gave her the option of going to juvenile detention or to the Sanctuary program.

Prior to entering the Sanctuary program, she had a very stormy relationship with her parents. She would come home from school, go straight to her room and then sneak out at night. In part due to the fact that her younger brother is disabled and required constant care and attention, she received very little attention from her parents.

Kathy stayed at the Sanctuary for the full 14 days permitted by law. She was a serious behavior problem until she had an intensive (4 hour) counseling session with a staff counselor and her "boyfriend." It was during this counseling session that she began to see the real motives of her "boyfriend" and subsequently broke off the relationship.

When it was time for her to leave the program, she experienced a deep depression, and was hospitalized for 3 weeks. After her hospitalization, she participated in the Sanctuary's aftercare program for another 6 months.

Today, Kathy is a young woman with a positive direction. The relationship with her family, especially her mother, has improved. She recently completed a booklet on her hospital experience for other potential youthful clients. She is presently an active volunteer at the Sanctuary program and has recently been nominated to be a member of the program's Board of Directors.

The four major objectives of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act are (1) to alleviate the problems of runaway and homeless youth; (2) to reunite them with their families; (3) to strengthen family relationships; and (4) to help youth decide upon a future course of action. The Runaway and Homeless Youth centers are the chief mechanism for achieving these purposes. I am pleased to report we now support at least one runaway and homeless youth center in most major U.S. cities.

I will share with you some of the outcomes of the recently completed fiscal year 1985 funding cycle for the award of basic center, coordinated networking and coordi-

nated discretionary grants to give you an idea of the breadth and scope of the services provided. The total appropriation for the FY 1985 national program for Runaway and Homeless Youth is $23,250,000.

We awarded 274 basic center grants to runaway and homeless youth programs located in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands. This represented an increase of 9 in the number of centers funded over the previous fiscal year, and represented $18,142,766, or 78% of our total appropriation. These grants support agencies which provide temporary shelter for runaway and homeless youth, counseling on a drop-in basis for troubled youth, and counseling and other services for the youth and their families.

Grants totaling $718,000 are being awarded for the support of 12 coordinated networks, serving the entire country, in fulfillment of Section 311 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act authorizing such grants. The Department defines a coordinated network as an association of two or more nonprofit private agencies whose purpose is to develop or strengthen services to runaway and homeless youth and their families. These networking grants will enable the centers we fund to work together, help each other in solving problems and serve as a conduit for the dissemination of research and demonstration results.

In fiscal year 1985, through the Office of Human Development Services Coordinated Discretionary Program, a total of 33 research and demonstration projects amounting to $3,465,791 of the RHYA funds have been awarded. These projects are focused on strengthening centers and their capability to address the increasing number and complexity of problems presented by the runaway and homeless youth and families they serve.

The areas supported and the amount of RHYA funds expended are: Independent Living, 4 projects, $292,500; Youth Employment, 5 projects, $286,723; Physical and Sexual Abuse of Runaways, 6 projects, $834,550; Chronic Runaways, 4 projects, $428,605; Shelter Linkages to Missing Children Programs, 5 projects, $590,486; Volunteer Networks for Runaway and Homeless Youth Services, 2 projects, $234,542; and Suicide Prevention in Runaway Shelters, 7 projects, $798,385.

In addition we participate fully in the work of the Federal Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the National Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the National Institute of Corrections.

For example, we recently published, in cooperation with the Department of Justice, *New Directions in Youth Services*, a monograph on State level coordination of youth services.

The information above pertains to how the RHYA FY1985 appropriation is being spent for the major program components. To describe our other services and activities, I will use FY1984 data which is the last year for which complete figures are available. This information is contained in the FY 1984 Annual Report to Congress which Secretary Heckler has submitted to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House on July 11, 1985 in fulfillment of our legislative requirement.

During FY 1984, DHHS-funded centers for runaway and homeless youth provided shelter services for an estimated 60,500 youth. In FY 1983 an estimated 44,000 youth were provided shelter. Youth receiving crisis intervention and other services on a drop-in basis were estimated at 245,000, compared with 132,000 in FY 1983. A total of 305,500 youth received residential or walk-in services during FY 1984.

About 80 percent of the youth receiving ongoing services were reunited with their families or guardians or placed in other positive living arrangements; 13 percent were placed in such stable group living situations as group homes; and approximately 7 percent of the youth served returned to the streets after receiving center services.

The program continued to support the National Communications System at a level of $350,000. This System, which consists of the National Runaway Switchboard and the Adolescent Suicide Hotline (added in FY 1985), provided referral and crisis intervention services to approximately 250,000 runaway and homeless youth and their families during FY 1984. In FY 1983 the system served 200,000 youth and families.

In FY 1984 we awarded 35 discretionary grants totaling $3,029,197 to a wide range of discretionary projects. These projects provide innovative strategies for addressing the needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families, including the prevention of runaway behavior.

ACYF continued the use of center program performance standards during FY 1984 in assessing the quality of the centers. Seventy-six centers were visited by regional ACYF staff for intensive on-site reviews. An equal number are scheduled for review in FY 1985. During FY 1984 all centers were required to provide ACYF re-

gional offices with documentation in the form of a self-assessment instrument which addressed each of the thirteen programmatic and services standards.

During FY 1984, my staff and I participated in a wide range of public and private national, regional, State and local level conferences, forums and seminars which addressed the needs and issues in services to runaway and homeless youth. The participation included the delivery of speeches and the chairing of conferences and seminar workshops such as those at the National Symposium of Runaway and Youth Services held in Washington, D.C. in February, 1984, and again this past February.

These program highlights will provide you with insight into how we are managing our responsibilities in implementing the Act. We realize that runaway behavior and homelessness among youth continue to be a major problem in the United States.

In our regulations (45 CFR Part 1351), DHHS defines a runaway youth as a "person under 18 years of age who absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of parents or legal guardians." We estimate that the number of runaway youth aged 10–17 in this country today is more than one million. Only approximations have been made of the number of homeless youth. The regulations define a homeless youth as a "person under 18 years of age who is in need of services and without a place of shelter where he or she receives supervision and care" (45 CFR Part 1351). The Department estimates that approximately 35 percent (roughly 100,000) of the youth receiving services under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act are homeless. The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services estimate that nationally the number of homeless youth each year is approximately 500,000.

Our services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Because we serve youth and families who are hurting, an immediate response is necessary whenever the cry goes out. Recently, the head counselor at Briarpatch, one of our programs in Madison, Wisconsin, received a weekend call from a distraught mother whose 14 year old daughter had just been brought home by the police. Kim had been away from home for 16 days and, at that moment, was preparing to leave again.

The counselor spoke with Kim on the phone and persuaded her, along with her parents, to come in immediately for crisis intervention counseling. Upon arriving at Briarpatch, the counselor explained the services offered and then met with Kim and her parents separately. Kim felt that she didn't have enough freedom; was afraid that she was pregnant; and felt rejected by her father with whom she had been very close until about 2 years ago. At that time, her father started abusing alcohol and drugs and there was very little support from her mother. Her parents felt that she was out of control and at that point, they were not working together to iron out their difficulties.

At the end of the initial session, Kim refused to go home and was placed in Briarpatch's emergency shelter. Later, she attempted suicide while at her boyfriend's house. Her boyfriend immediately called the shelter which in turn notified her parents and called the poison control center. It was determined that the pills Kim took would only make her dizzy and sick to her stomach.

This incident brought her parents closer and reaffirmed their commitment to improving their family life. Kim has returned home and her family is attending weekly counseling.

I would like to devote some attention to the National Communications System which, as I noted earlier, consists of the National Runaway Switchboard and the Adolescent Suicide Hotline. Both of these services are provided under a grant to Metro-Help, Inc., of Chicago, IL. The System is designed to provide information, referral and counseling services to youth and their families nationwide. The Switchboard serves as a toll-free, neutral channel of communication, allowing youth contemplating suicide or leaving home to receive crisis counseling and referral services. Runaway and homeless youth can receive similar services or contact their parents while away from home. Similarly, parents can use the system to contact their children through an intermediary, trained volunteer counselor.

Since its inception, the Switchboard has provided services to more than two million callers. In the first year of operation, 1975, the Switchboard received approximately 11,000 calls. In FY 1984, approximately 250,000 callers were provided crisis counseling, referral, and message delivery services.

The Switchboard operates 24 hours a day, year round, and employs nine full-time paid staff, 5 to 15 part-time employees, and approximately 200 volunteers, each of whom receives at least 40 hours of intensive training.

They receive training in listening and helping skills and topical areas such as suicide and substance abuse counseling. The Switchboard maintains information on more than 5,000 agencies which provide services to youth and families and to which callers can be referred for immediate or long-term assistance.

During FY 1984, the Department awarded a grant totaling $472,051 to Metro-Help to continue the operation of the Switchboard. Of that amount, $122,051 was for a special supplemental grant to conduct a third-party evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness and impact of services provided by the Switchboard. The evaluation is scheduled to be completed in August 1985.

Of the approximately 250,000 callers who contracted the Switchboard this year, 53 percent were referred to services within their communities, and almost 20 percent of the youth callers used the services to contact their families through the message delivery component. Fifty-five percent of the youth callers were female and 45 percent were male. More than half of the youth callers (53.2 percent) were runaways who have been away from home from 4–7 days. Over 40 percent received crisis intervention counseling from the volunteer counselors. In addition, each month the Switchboard handles over 2,000 calls which are potential suicides or similar high-stress situations.

About a year ago, we received a letter from Amy, a 17 year old on the West Coast who said she had nowhere to live, could not return home, and was desperate. She had written to President Reagan, and the White House immediately referred the letter to us. We called the Switchboard, and with just the phone number of an acquintance to go on, they located her, saw to her immediate needs by getting her into a runaway center, and then followed up to see that she received assistance in finding a job, and, ultimately, an apartment with a roomate.

In June 1984, a new telecommunications system was inaugurated at the Switchboard which has resulted in a number of improvements in services delivery. These include: doubling the number of incoming and outgoing lines; including, for the first time, Alaska and Hawaii in the service area; and improving the reception on the lines, especially for call conferencing between youth and their families or service providers. Work is also underway to complete improvements in Metro-Help's in-house capacity to use and update the agency's resource directory. The system, which will be completed during FY 1985, will facilitate the retrieval of resource information for callers and reduce the time it takes to locate resources from an average six minutes to approximately thirty seconds.

This essential service provides young people with counseling and information services in a neutral, helpful manner which may prevent them from leaving home or participating in anti-social behavior.

I have provided you with facts and figures on the national dimensions of this program. These figures, however, do not adequately represent the impact of our services on the lives of young people and their families. I want to share with you a story, recently related to me, which I feel describes the depth of our impact on individual lives.

Running away from his rural hometown, Jeff, 17, ends up in the seamy section of Des Moines—Iowa's largest urban setting. Prior to this runaway episode, he had been sent to live with an aunt and uncle as a way to alleviate the conflicts with his parents at home. Rebelling against the traditional values and mores of his farm family, he was acting out his frustrations by doing such things as letting his hair grow long and dyeing it outrageous colors.

Living on the streets of Des Moines, where he was exposed to exploitation, he was spotted by one of the Youth and Shelter Services' outreach counselors. Part of the counselor's responsibility is to do detached street work in areas frequented by youth. It was quite obvious to the counselor that Jeff was very ill. He agreed to accompany the counselor to the program where his medical needs were attended to first. Jeff had both a serious viral infection and VD of the throat. He was then placed in the emergency shelter. During his 14-day stay, his parents came in for family counseling. He returned home after 14 days; and he and his family continued out-client counseling for a year. Today, Jeff is attending junior college and living at home.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee, my formal testimony concludes on this positive note, which is typical of the successes reported by runaway and homeless youth shelters around the country. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. KILDEE. Our next witness is a panel of one. It's June Bucy, executive director, the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services. Would you come forward, please?

STATEMENT OF JUNE BUCY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES

Ms. BUCY. Mr. Chairman, my name is June Bucy. I'm the executive director, as you've just said, of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services.

The National Network is a national organization of more than 500 members, which include most of the programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. It also includes many programs that work in youth employment, in alternative education, in family counseling, of other crises services, and general social services directed toward young people and their families.

I'm glad you said this morning, quoting from the GAO and the inspector general's report, that these programs are among the most remarkable programs in our country. They are staffed by dedicated, creative, energetic people. And it was my pleasure to serve in a runaway center for 12. And I still have a little bit of trouble realizing that I no longer get to work with children each day, but try to represent them here in Washington.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify today and to share information, concerns, and suggestions for public policy. I have submitted a statement, and would like for it to be included in the record.

We also, in the National Network, have recently done a study that I would like to submit for the record. And we'll just talk more informally.

One thing that I want to make very, very clear is that the young people with whom we work are wonderful, wonderful people. They are not the dregs of society. They are not kids who are belligerent or who wilfully make mistakes. They are young people who are often the brightest and most caring members of their families.

They are kids who are saying no. No to the violence they find in their homes, to the lack of respect that they find their family members have for each other, to situations, perhaps, at school as well as in their homes and their communities where they are regarded as failures, and they know they are not failures or that they don't have to be. They're saying no to series of foster placement where they go from place to place to place and lose all contact with their friends, have to change schools a multitude of times, and find that their lives are simply adding up to nothing.

That's why kids run away. They're running from the chaos in their lives. Often, when they run, they are lost on the streets. They are preyed upon on the streets. But, then, many of these young people have friends and they have families of their friends who take them in, or they have extended families.

Many, also, are not found by people that they know and go to the shelters. The shelters and host homes that have been set up under the runaway programs are safe places for children to be. They are staffed with skilled professionals who can help the young people find out, to assess what's going on in their own lives, to consider the options that they have to make some choices about goals and work toward those goals.

Most of the shelters are not freestanding little houses where woebegone children go. Most of them are now very sophisticated pro-

grams. The survey that we just did said that an average of 13 services is given by all of the runaway programs that answered these questions. They are health services. They are educational services. There are job placement and independent living training programs. They really are sophisticated programs that are meeting a multitude of these families' needs. And they help get young people back with families whenever that is possible, but families that have stopped and considered what it is that they want for their family, what it is that binds them together, and finding new ways to get to those places and those goals that the family shares.

Our "To Whom Do They Belong" survey asked that question. To whom do these young people, who have left their own homes because they found to be satisfactory—or I think, more crucially, have been forced from those homes or have been forced from the child protective system, because that system does not function at all well for young people.

We have found in talking about money that of the programs that receive the Runaway and Homeless Youth money that money constitutes 31.6 percent of their local budgets.

If there is any program in this country that has tapped into every bit of private sector business there is, the Runaway Program has to be at the head of the list. We have, from our survey, shown that there are 8,418 volunteers, who are giving 810,513 hours of service, and an additional $2,606,510 million in in-kind services. This is often donated services or donated food or all sorts of things that the program manages to get.

The network members have been very, very active in their States and have tried to get State policies and State funding mechanisms in place.

New York, Florida, Texas all have some sort of runaway act or a line item in the budget, the State budget, to take care of these children.

Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Michigan are other States that have used funds from the State budget for these children.

California and New Jersey are working very hard to join those States.

Nevertheless, last year, 5,682 children came to a shelter, asked to be taken in, and were told there was no room. Another 3,439 were turned away from shelters because it was considered an inappropriate place for them to be. And that was often because they were troubled young people, they were judged to be too emotionally disturbed to be safe in those programs or to be safe with other children.

We are literally turning away. And as we're talking about missing children, what I want to say is that there are many children who are not missing at all. They are knocking on our doors, and we're saying, no, there is no room.

There are many programs who do not turn children away. They disregard the licensing law. They let children come in and sleep on the couches, or on the floor, or whatever. Generally, that is not a good thing to do. And I think the standards that are a part of the Runaway Program are very, very good standards and should be maintained.

And, so, the idea of however many kids can push their way into a house at one time, while it may take care of those children, it certainly lowered the quality of services that can be given to children when there are more kids there than counselors can care for. So, it's a real box.

We would like to commend the administration, HHS for the care with which they administer these programs, and particularly for their good discretionary programs and research efforts. They have gotten out on the cutting edges of the issue.

The network has helped them do that. And Ms. Livingston just said that they picked up the suicide issue because the shelters asked for. I think that one of the main things that the runaway shelters do is serve as a window on the services of the community. We pick up those children who drop through the cracks. And our program can tell you 3 or 4 years before the experts have figured it out what the new, emerging service needs are and what's going on in communities, just as we picked up the suicide information 2 years before it was shown anywhere else.

I think that one of the most valuable things these comprehensive, open programs do is give you information about what's going on.

The programs need staff training, particularly for new programs. There used to be a training program in place. That has been shifted somewhat. And as new programs are started and new staff hired, there is simply very, very little training that brings those people along to where the rest of us have been and to the new technologies that have been figured out. They need other resources.

It's one thing to resolve a crisis. But many of these children need longer term care, and it's simply not available, so that those total community resources need to be put in place. Many of the shelters are suffering from their buildings in great disrepair.

The program where I worked in Galveston had the feeling; every time you touched the doorknob, it came off in your hands. It's one of the functions of a building being 100 years old and of having 16 children live in it.

And there's rarely any money to be used for capital improvements. The programs have to meet very stringent health standards, fire prevention standards, which we would want them to. But keeping those buildings patched together is a real, real hassle.

We need better salaries for staff. I think it's very ironic that we cannot pay living wages in the shelters.

In Galveston, almost every time I lost a staff member to go to a much higher paying job, it was because that staff member could not support their family on the wage that we were paying. It's really bad that in order to take care of your own children, very skilled professionals cannot help the most desperately needful children in this country.

But salaries range anywhere from $8,000 to $12,000 for people who work with these children on a direct service basis. And some of the more skilled and longer service people get more. But it's really a very underpaid vocation. And what we then are left with is new staff who have to be trained, and no training money.

I will say for the 15th time already this morning one of the greatest needs is for better data. I think it's very unfortunate that

we toss words around, missing children, homeless children, runaway children, system's kids, all of these words without any clear agreed upon behavioral definition, so that it's perfectly easy for anyone to sort of make up their own data and run with it.

It seems to me that this is a problem that has been with us for many years, that we do need data. We need definitions that make some sense and that everybody will abide by.

We also need to maintain quality programs and the standards that are put into those programs. No one could be more concerned than I about needing more programs across the country from these children who desperately need these programs. But it seems to me a real tragedy that a program will find out at the very end of June that their budget starting in July has been cut $15,000 in order that a new program can be started.

What we have, then, is a new program that's insufficiently funded to ever get off the ground and get going, no way to start up something that will be beneficial to the community, and another program crippled because money has been allocated to another program.

It's a stressful thing. And I suppose the only answer that I can think of is that we simply need to put more money into these programs and we need to hold harmless the funds for programs that are good and meet the standards and are doing as they should. And new programs, it seems to me, should be funded out of additional funds that would not cripple the programs in that area.

The National Network stands ready to help you and your committee in any way possible to interpret the needs of these young people and to advise with you about the particular issues that are coming up in terms of some of the cutting edge sorts of problems that these kids have or the reflection that we have about how the whole needs of society have precipitated some of these problems.

It seems to me that, as we're shifting the way social services are administered, I thought of an analogy yesterday. It's like a family that has decided to cut back on its heating bill and keep the temperature much lower than they had and save the oil, and they can save money. If they do that, they need to buy warmer clothes. And it seems to me that we've cut back on things, perhaps properly, to save some money, but the safety net under that, the provision for those people who are—thereby find their circumstances changed simply will be a larger expense.

And I would say that runaway and homeless children are among those groups that need extra protection in this time of deficit thinking.

Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

You say that the freeze which has been proposed for this agency really would be a cut for those programs that are receiving funds. Because if you take on new programs, then the existing programs will be receiving fewer dollars.

I know that's the case with the programs in Michigan.

And, you know, you're really torn. Because you certainly want to have new programs to serve more young people. Yet, at the same time, in so doing, you cut the quality, very often, of the programs that are already existing.

Ms. BUCY. And often cut the capacity of those programs to serve children. Most licensing laws are a function of—for instance, in Texas, every eight children in the house, you have to have another staff person. So that if you cannot have two staff people around the clock, you may very well have to lower your licensing standard by eight children. And you have probably eliminated more services by those kinds of cuts than you have served more children by spreading the wealth.

Mr. KILDEE. You've indicated that there's not sufficient data on the numbers of runaway and homeless youth. What Federal agencies do you think should be involved in gathering accurate data on this? It's difficult for this committee to get that data. Do you have any suggestions as to how we could do a better job in getting that information?

Ms. BUCY. Well, as you know, the Runaway Youth Act is title IiI of the Juvenile Justice Act. And those programs really support each other. That the deinstitutionalization, the not locking children up, means that they need to be served by open programs in the community, which have been the runaway programs.

So, I think it's absolutely essential that HHS and the Department of Justice work on those.

It's our observation that HUD has some interesting figures and some real concerns. Because they've done studies of homeless people and have pulled out from that information about homeless youth, who, I might say, need very different services than homeless people who have been discharged from mental hospitals or who are at the end of their life, often, and, certainly, at the end of their health, and their mental abilities, and so forth. Those people need a place to stay that's comfortable, and clean, and where they are well cared for.

Homeless young people need opportunities for education, for job training, for drug abuse treatment. They're not ready to be just cared for. They need to be equipped to live a productive life in our society.

So, I would suggest HUD. I think the GAO could probably bring an objectivity to it and sort out some differences people may have.

I would also encourage you to see that the service professionals, those people who work with these children day after day in local communities, where things are not so categorical, and they see a child who may have been referred from one system or another, but this child comes from a certain kind of family and has certain characteristics. And I think the providers have a great deal to offer in terms of how these children should be categorized.

Mr. KILDEE. The problem of missing children has received a great deal of attention. And, yet, some agencies of Government, including, I think, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the other day, said that the problem is exaggerated.

And it's hard to respond to that because of the lack of sufficient data. Do you have any response, though, to the general statement of some agencies that the problem has been exaggerated?

Ms. BUCY. I think to the degree that people have said or others have been led to believe that there are thousands of stranger abducted children in this world or in this country, that the data is not very good on that, and there does not seem to be that.

As a grandmother, I find it regretful that my grandson is frightened when he goes into a mall that he's going to get lost. Children are being told on all sides that people are there to grab them and that every stranger is a potential enemy.

I wasn't raised in that kind of world. And I didn't raise my children in that kind of world. And I find it very regretful that we're frightening little children and we're frightening their parents. And there doesn't seem to really be any reason for that fright, because the numbers are very, very low.

The idea of parental abductions, I think, needs to be best addressed in State laws that give some sort of consistency, so that a parent cannot take a child into another State and be safe there from a custody decision that was made in the home State. And there are ways of going about those issues.

The missing children's movement or issue has certainly involved the law enforcement personnel at a much better level than we runaway folk were ever able to manage.

This just notice that just a runaway, meaning that you have a willful brat, and no police officer should look for that child, or since running away is not against the law, then it's not appropriate for police to be involved, I think has ignored the safety of those children. I'm not saying that you need to track them down in order to lock them up. But children alone on the street are going to be exploited. And it is an appropriate protective measure.

And I think the law enforcement involvement in the missing children's issue has been very good. I also think that it's gotten America in touch with the fact that we really do care about our children.

There was this feeling that children aren't important, that they don't matter any more, and sort of a downgrading of young people. And this, this feeling has gotten us back in touch with the fact that we really do love and want to protect our children.

One of the things, it seems to me, is important is that if, indeed, most of the missing children are runaway children or children who have been forced from their homes, that more of the preventive kinds of hints and information and activities, and certainly funded kind of things, if the Federal Government should fund those, should be directed toward adolescents, who are the missing children.

This idea of the most important thing for a missing child is to know your area code, and not to have Jimmy written on your shirt, is not terribly effective for an adolescent. Those children need to know that there are adults they can go and talk to and tell what's hurting, that there are places that are safe, so that they do not have to go to the streets and be exploited when they can't handle their issue.

A runaway child is just as much at risk on the streets as any missing child. And until they are found, you don't know whether they are missing or whether they have been torn away by someone else.

I think this throwaway child, this child who is rejected from his home or from the system—there are thousands of children in this country who have been taken into custody because there was abuse or neglect in their home. And it's disgraceful the way that those

children have been moved from place to place and then eventually given an early emancipation because everybody is tired of this. Those are the children that give runaway problem—shelters a lot problem, and that end up being exploited on the street.

Those are our children. The State has become their parent, and we've been a very, very bad parent.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you.

The concern for children by this subcommittee is nonpartisan. I think the person who illustrates that nonpartisanship on this is the ranking minority member of the committee, Tom Tauke. He's a great person to have as the ranking minority member on this committee.

Mr. TAUKE. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And it's great to have you as chairman, also. And I appreciate the opportunity to work with you.

I apologize for not being here at the opening of the hearing. We have a markup going on, on Superfund, and I have amendments coming up periodically, which I had to offer.

First, Mr. Chairman, I would like an opportunity to place a statement in the hearing record, which I won't bore you with now.

Mr. KILDEE. Without objection.

[Opening statement of Hon. Thomas J. Tauke follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS J. TAUKE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IOWA

Approximately a million of our Nation's youth have voluntarily left their homes. Although a vast majority of those return within two days, a tragic number become part of a dangerous and predatory subculture of the streets. Many who leave home for minor reasons soon find themselves stranded in strange cities and exposed to exploitation, serious danger, and even death. Many must resort to criminal activities simply to survive. Drug dealers and pimps capitalize on their vulnerability and desperation. Recent studies indicate that 75% of prostitutes began as runaways. A recent report by the Louisville/Jefferson County Police Department reflects that up to 11 percent of the children who have voluntarily left home end up as victims of criminal or sexual exploitation during their time away from home. Unfortunately, many of these runaways are never heard from again, and tragically, many of our runaway youth end up as homicide victims. These young people are definitely at risk.

In an October 1983 report, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services asserted that only one in four or one in five runaways or homeless youth who is seen by police and juvenile probation personnel is ever officially counted, arrested, or detained. Certainly, many runaways are not reported as missing by their parents. Moreover, a statistically structured study in California found that only one in six runaways is reported as missing by parents or guardians and that only one in five runaways is aware of the availability of runaway shelters.

Moreover, a population of children in this country are "kicked out" of their homes or abandoned under various circumstances. As these cases are seldom brought to the attention of authorities, the number of children who suffer this fate is difficult if not impossible to determine.

In response to the growing concern about the number of children who suffer this fate is difficult if not impossible to determine.

In response to the growing concern about the number of runaways in the U.S. and the lack of services to meet the needs of these youth, Congress enacted the Runaway Youth Act in 1974. The legislative intent of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program is to provide financial assistance to establish and strengthen centers serving runaway and homeless youth and their families.

Efforts have been made by the private sector to address this problem as well. For example, in 1984, Trailways Corporation and the International Association of Chiefs of Police established "Operation Home Free" to reunite runaway youth with their families. A child identified as a runaway who agrees to go home will be given free transportation aboard Trailways to his or her home community. The parents are no-

tified and agree to meet the child. Local runaway and homeless youth projects help secure necessary authorizations as well as inform young people in their shelters of this program.

Such efforts are commendable. Early intervention such as that provided by youth and shelter services represented here today are a key in addressing this problem. We must however, take a serious look at the causes of the problems if we are going to attempt to solve them. I am looking forward to today's testimony in hopes that we can answer some very serious questions: Why are these children so distraught that they are fleeing from their circumstances? Are they running from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse? These children are often not running to something but away from something. Social factors such as weakening family structures and multiple family problems need to be assessed s they relate to these young people.

Since runaway youth comprise the overwhelming majority of missing children, coordination between missing children and runaway programs is essential. Another issue which we must address is long-term care. Regulations restrict the length of stay at a shelter to 14 days. This can create problems for shelters where alternative placements are not available for homeless children or youths who are too young to qualify for public assistance and live on their own, but who cannot return home. We need to address this gap in services for the young people who are not covered by the system.

One thing is certain, we have a commitment to the young people of this nation to protect and rescue this large population of our young citizens who are most certainly at risk. They certainly need our attention, and they certainly need our help.

Mr. TAUKE. Second, I'd like to explore just a few questions with you that perhaps you have already answered, but I didn't have an opportunity to hear all of your testimony, and for that I apologize.

First, could you tell us what your observation is about State and local involvement in runaway shelters? Are we seeing an increase or a decrease in the State and local involvement? Are we doing what needs to be done to encourage it? Can you speak to that statement?

Ms. BUCY. I think we need to always encourage more involvement. But my experience as a program provider in talking with other people is that probably there's no program in these communities that has more local and State involvement and enthusiasm.

The witnesses coming after I am will talk about some of the participation in their community with police officers, with child protection people, with schools.

We've recently been working on a project for educational health services for the runaway centers and have found that hospitals, that medical professional people, that there's a twoway thing in schools. Many, many, many of the programs have outreach services in the schools. They are doing suicide counseling. They are doing drug abuse counseling.

In many communities, the schools are having and sending a teacher into the program themselves. There are all kinds of community relationships. It's probably the most outstanding characteristic of the program.

Some States—and I did mention this before—have begun to adjust their policies to care for these young people. And some States—not as many as should—are beginning to fund the programs or fund status offender programs directly. In New York, and, to some degree, Texas, and, I think, Florida have all built in to their State provisions the same kind of standards that the Federal Government so wisely put in this program 11 years ago when the legislation was passed.

So, this is truly one of those programs where the Federal Government has set standards and provided the leadership, and it is being recognized and picked up at the local and State levels.

Mr. TAUKE. And, so, you're seeing an increase in the State and local activity I gather.

Ms. BUCY. Yes. Uh-huh. And programs are working very hard for that to continue.

Mr. TAUKE. There's some perception that this is primarily a big city problem and that there is less difficulty in some other areas of the country. Is it true that there are areas of the country in which the problem is substantially worse than in other areas?

Ms. BUCY. Runaway children don't tend to go anywhere. They want to go back home. And they hang around in fond hopes their family will let them in or that whatever is going on will be adjusted.

Some children who, perhaps, on their fourth or fifth run, find that they can't make it at home do go to large cities. And there are resort areas. But the problem is across the country.

I don't know whether you've seen the film "Streetwise" that was taken in Seattle about young people there on the streets with no home to go to. That film was shown in North Dakota. And after the film, at a reception, people were talking about isn't it awful in the big city. There were young people there from the shelters, and they said, oh, but our plight is worse.

One of the major themes in "Streetwise" was that the children take care of each other, that they have developed a way of building the younger and more vulnerable children into their own support. That doesn't exist in rural areas. Services are much farther apart. And the National Network has a very strong stand that probably our most underserved areas now are the rural areas, and that that's where we should be spending a good deal of attention.

Mr. TAUKE. Speaking to that issue, can you give us any indication of rural areas of the country, what level of service we have at the current time, or how big are the gaps that we have in those rural areas?

Ms. BUCY. The law, as it was passed in 1980, in the 1980 reauthorization, specified, for the first time, that funds be allocated based on populations for States. And that changed some of the States that got that.

But, given the fact that it's a population based thing, it doesn't—geography doesn't get factored in at any place. Most often, the rural programs have a center some place and outreach efforts. There's an outstanding program in Northern Virginia, where host homes across 16 counties, some 250 host homes, that allow young people to come into their home at no expense for their—they are not paid to be that foster parent. The money goes in to the counseling and support services.

There's some good models out there. But it is very, very difficult to get those funded.

Mr. TAUKE. Do you think there should be a geographic consideration?

Ms. BUCY. It seems to me that it may be more important to fund quality programs, than to be sure that they are distributed only on

that population basis, that there are other considerations. And the places where young people cluster should receive some extra care.

That may very well be the responsibility of the States. And I think one of the ways that States could see those responsibilities more if there were more Federal leadership or guidance in that direction.

Mr. TAUKE. I recall a town meeting which I had a couple of years ago, when someone suggested the Federal Government was contributing to the runaway youth problem by providing these shelters that make it so easy for kids to leave home.

How would you have responded if you had been at the meeting?

Ms. BUCY. I've had that question brought up. And my standard response is to ask people if they have seen the latest figures of how many accidents the emergency rooms at hospitals cause. And when they don't quite snap to what I'm saying, I ask how many people run their cars into each other so that they can be treated by the new emergency ambulance.

I think that's ridiculous. These children are hurting, hurting children. Now, there are some who are not hurting that much, who may have a temporary kind of thing that, in our adult wisdom, we would say is not that big an issue.

Frankly, I would rather have a few children come when it's not that big an issue than deny safety to a child who is in a desperate, desperate situation.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Tauke.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has asserted that the Federal juvenile justice mandate to deinstitutionalize status offenders has, in effect, released these juveniles to the exploitation of the streets, and has prevented the confinement of runaways and abused children for their own protection.

Do you agree with that published statement?

Ms. BUCY. I agree that it has prevented the confinement of these young people, and I'm all for that. That, as I understand, was the point of deinstitutionalization—was that a young person who had not committed a crime was not to be denied his civil liberties and locked up for that.

There are certainly children who are destructive to themselves and to other people. My experience is that those children often have committed a crime and good police work would result in a charge of a real offense against that child, and then they could be put in some sort of locked facility, and they would know why they were put there and would know it was their behavior that had caused that.

And I think we should have good detention facilities and good criminal justice and that children should be made to be responsible.

I also see no reason why a child who has not done anything, but simply lives in a small community where there are no shelter programs, or is coming from such a troubled situation, or perhaps is mentally or emotionally disturbed, why that child should be locked up for his protection.

This whole notion of chronic runaways is—I think, again, it would be nice to have data to know how many children we're talking about, to know who these children are.

People tell me, as I've asked them, and this certainly was my experience, that often these children have been severely abused at home or that they have real mental health problems. It's all but impossible to get mental health care for an adolescent who does not have good insurance. If you ain't rich, you ain't crazy is the words. There's just no way to get that kind of routine mental health assessment.

I also think that a lot of times young people are expected to be a little on the crazy side. Adolescence, in our culture, is a time of effervescence, of trying things out. And we let young people do very, very bizarre things and say, just a kid. We would not let little children do these things. We would not let older people do these things without realizing that they had some mental health problems. We let adolescents act out and fail to pick up on the signals that they are giving or the kinds of needs that they have.

For those children who have these needs, who are, perhaps, violent and are constantly on the run, we need long-term structured programs. Fourteen days is not going to do it for a child who really has a lot of problems and who cannot go back home without suffering some sort of abuse or a situation there that is untenable, often incest.

So, to not provide the services for these kids, and then say that we have to lock them up, I think is a very, very poor way to go.

Mr. KILDEE. You don't feel, then, the Federal mandate on status offenders has made these children vulnerable to exploitation? You would want to keep in place that Federal mandate on status offenders?

Ms. BUCY. I understand there's a Federal mandate for child protective services. And if these children were provided the protective services that they need, that they would not be forced to the street. And what we need to look at is the kind of services that we are denying young people.

Mr. KILDEE. What you are saying, then, is the alternatives need not be secure facilities——

Ms. BUCY. That's right.

Mr. KILDEE [continuing]. Or exploitation, that there are many services in between that could protect them from exploitation.

Ms. BUCY. I also think there's a little thinking going on here as sort of a—I think—white, middle-class way of looking at things, that being put into a detention center or perhaps a jail, and hearing that door slam, scares you straight. It's a great idea. And for some folks—I think it would scare me straight all right. For the young people who constantly run, it just doesn't. It doesn't work that way. And our notions about what's going to straighten kids up that are that kind of reflections of our own adult socioeconomic status just doesn't cut it for young children.

Mr. KILDEE. I would agree. I think very often, the secure facilities are just a way to avoid the type of services that these children need.

Ms. BUCY. I remember asking, years ago—and I started working in this in 1971. I asked a young lady if she had ever been in deten-

tion. And she said, not yet. That's what her family did. They all got in trouble and they ended up in jail. No big deal as far as she was concerned. And a few days in jail is simply not going to do anything for people who expect that to be a part of their life.

If we're going to turn these kids around, we're going to have to work harder at it than that.

Mr. KILDEE. The OJJDP also has stated recently that staff restrictive facilities are not in violation of that Federal mandate. Would you want to comment on that? Do you know what they mean by staff restrictive yet?

Ms. BUCY. No. And I don't think anybody else does. There are as many definitions as there are people to give them.

In some places—I understand the State of Washington—staff secure is a licensing category, and it is a function of a certain number of children and a certain number of staff. And if you have that, so be it.

I think there are other people who conjure up a vision of some big body barring the door and you can't go out. It's my experience kids never go out the door anyway. They go out the window upstairs, I mean.

I used to plead with them. If you're going to runaway, would you go out the door and quit tearing up the balcony.

I just don't think it's a feasible concept. I do think that any time we have children under the care of people other than families, or their families, either, for that matter, they should be in a safe place, and there should be enough adults around that, indeed, it is a secure, safe place to be.

I don't think telling kids that they can't leave is a way to cure them of their problems. Basically, I think what you say, if you say, ha, ha, you know, here's the game to see how you get out of this one, and set it up as a place that children want to leave—one thing that seems to get missed in all of this, and I checked this out last summer, when the staff secure was a part of the—an amendment that was later deleted from the bill, I do not know of a single runaway program in this country that does not have many, many more children who are self-referred than children who run away from the program.

If you're going to lock up runaways, you are going to force children into the street, because kids are not going to self-refer themselves to a place where they get locked up very often. Some do. They're so frightened they'll refer themselves to anybody that will take them in. But, basically, kids are not going to do that. And I seriously doubt that you could run a secure program and let folks just wander in and say, take me, I'm yours.

So, I think the idea of making the program impossible for children to escape would end up denying many children services.

Mr. KILDEE. I've often felt, in talking to people who really want those secure facilities, almost that very often it's akin to out of sight, out of mind or out of budget.

Ms. BUCY. Uh-huh.

Mr. KILDEE. They feel maybe it's a cheaper way of handling the situation. But it's not, really,—I concur with you—a way to solve needs.

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Ms. BUCY. I was talking with some people who were being asked by their State department of social services to have a place where the kids had to be there. And I say, you know, what's this for? And they said, so when the case workers, 3 weeks later, after they've said they'd be there, when they finally get around to coming and seeing the child the child will be there.

I don't think we need to lock up kids in order to make people's case work easier for them.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much for your testimony this morning. I appreciate it very much.

[Prepared Statement of June Bucy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JUNE BUCY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, my name is June Bucy, and I am the Executive Director of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services. The National Network is a national, nonprofit organization comprised of more than 500 agencies and coalitions of agencies across America that provide services to runaway, homeless, and other troubled youth and their families. These services include shelter care, counseling, streetwork, remedial education, family reunification, and a wide variety of other services which I will discuss later in my testimony. Our membership covers every state in the nation and includes groups such as the Michigan Network of Runaway and Youth Services, the Illinois Collaboration for Youth, Youth and Shelter Services in Ames, Iowa, the California Child, Youth, and Family Coalition, and the Ohio Youth Services Network.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). Before I begin my testimony, Mr. Chairman, I also want to express the National Network's sincerest appreciation to you for your leadership and years of diligent work, not only on behalf of runaway and homeless youth, but also on behalf of all juvenile justice concerns and issues. The National Network looks forward to working with you and other Subcommittee members to insure that America's troubled youth receive the protections and support which they need.

The respective histories and achievements of the RHYA and the National Network closely parallel each other. The law was enacted in 1974 partially, at least, as a result of youth-serving organizations including the Network, working for this landmark legislation. The Network was incorporated that same year and has since served as an advocate for youth, and as a training and coordinating organization for program providers. I want to discuss some of the strengths and successes of the centers and demonstration projects funded under the RHYA, identify the current needs of the youth, shelters, and communities as revealed in a recent national survey conducted by our organization, and offer some recommendations to the Subcommittee on issues and services affecting these young people and their families.

Mr. Chairman, the most reliable national estimates are that there are between 1.3 and 1.5 million runaway and homeless youth each year. These troubled young people are in every state and community in our nation, represent every racial and ethnic population, and are from families covering all income levels. A substantial number of these young people can be described as multi-problem. They have experienced failure in school, have abused drugs and alcohol, have been victims of abuse, neglect, or sexual exploitation, and many have had negative contact with the law enforcement system. Most important to remember is that these youth are from families. While the youth's running away may be the most publicly obvious behavior, the problems that led to this behavior often involve the entire family. Shelters funded under the RHYA when possible begin their attempts to help the youth, by working with the family and promoting the youth/family reunification as their first goal. It is in this context of runaway and homeless youth programs as family service agencies, that I want to emphasize the programs' strengths.

RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAMS WORK AND WORK WELL

Recently the National Network carried out a national survey which gathered statistics from 210 runaway and homeless youth services agencies representing 50 states and Puerto Rico. The National Network is pleased to release today the results of this survey, in our report,"To Whom Do They Belong: A Profile of America's

Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them." Our report validates the findings of the September 1983 GAO Report to this Subcommittee; namely that runaway and homeless programs effectively provide a mix of services to youth and their families.

Our report indicates that shelters provide an *average* of 13 different types of services to the youth including shelter, individual and family counseling, education, pre-employment training, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, hotline services, foster care, and more. The 210 agencies reported a "positive determination" rate of 57%—that is 57% of the more than 50,000 youth who received at least one night of shelter were either reunited with their families or placed in a safe living environment. The National Network believes that this figure is probably lower than the actual number of youth whose lives and circumstances have been improved by virtue of their involvement with a shelter program. This number may be low in that shelter staff are not always able to maintain contact with and track the progress of the youth and their families for an extended period of time following the youth's stay at the shelter or in the host home. Some programs had much higher positive placement rates than others. More research is needed to determine if this difference is a function of the intake criteria, the program policies and performance of individual programs, or the availiability of long term community resources for homeless youth.

Mr. Chairman, rather than detailing the entire report in my testimony, I would like to submit it for the record and just briefly highlight a few of its major findings and conclusions.

With the current emphasis on public/private partnerships, voluntarism, and the need for state and local government support of social services, runaway and homeless youth programs more than satisfy even the strictest scrutiny. The 156 RHYA grantees covered in our report had a average of 5 other funding sources including other federal sources, state and local government, United Way, foundations, corporations, individual donors, and their own creative fundraising activities. Furthermore, the 210 respondent agencies for a one year period generated 8,418 volunteers who gave 810,513 hours of their time. An additional $2,606,510 of in-kind services and non-cash donations also were received. When critics challenge these programs to prove their community and private sector support, they should know that runaway and homeless youth programs have been documenting such successes for years.

As noted before, this funding partnership also involves state governments. Wisconsin, Texas, New York, Oklahoma, and Florida have state line items for runaway and homeless youth services. New Jersey and California state legislature currently are considering similar legislation. Other states provide services to runaway and homeless youth through their juvenile justice, child welfare, and protective services systems.

This substantial non-federal and private sector support, however, does not imply that the RHYA funds are negligible to local centers. In fact, the opposite is true—the federal support provided by the RHYA funds is essential for the continued success of these programs. RHYA funds are the linch pin which help convince state and local, public and private funding sources that the shelters deserve their support. RHYA programs meet and exceed the excellent performance standards written into the Act, satisfy fiscal and programmatic audits, and work cooperatively with other shelters across the country as well as other human services agencies in their respective communities.

In summarizing the increasingly successful development of the RHYA program, Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the shelters for their ability to provide more sophisticated and appropriate services to what seems to be a growing population of troubled, often alienated young people. To use a familar expression, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." The RHYA centers are often the bottom line responsible agencies for prevention and crisis intervention to youth and family services in their communities. These shelters serve the at-risk and high-risk youth populations, and often are the last remaining hope for those youth who have fallen in and out of foster care, protective services, juvenile court, and dysfunctional family situations. RHYA programs are this nation's best, most cost-effective strategy for preventing today's runaway, homeless and other troubled youth from aprenticing into tomorrow's generation of homeless, welfare dependent adults. As such the program deserves increased federal support which, in turn, will leverage additional private sector funds, volunteers, and community support.

The success of the RHYA programs, as documented by our report and several other national and regional studies, does not mean that the programs have reached their full potential or have met all their challenges. In the remainder of my testimony I want to discuss the needs which shelter staff, boards of directors, and support-

ers have expressed to the National Network and identify some key policy issues for the Subcommittee's consideration.

Program needs

Five major program needs were identified by more than half of the 210 survey respondents. The critical nature of these service needs is perhaps best understood as a derivative from the responses to the following question in the survey:

"During the past year, National Network staff and others in Washington, D.C. concerned with runaway and homeless youth services and policy have heard comments from shelter staff to the effect that the youth they serve "are more troubled, have more serious problems, and require more specialized services" than did the youth who were coming to the shelters 5–6 years ago. Does the experience of your program during the past year agree or not agree with this generalization? If it agrees, how? For example, some staff identify a greatly increased number of referrals from the juvenile court. Others note more youth with serious drug and alcohol problems, and accelerated staff burnout. What disturbing trends have you seen in the youth your agency serves, and how has your program tried to address those problems?"

61.5% (129) of the programs responded that the youth they are serving seem more troubled and/or multiproblem than the youth they were serving 5–6 years ago.

1.5% (3) of the programs responded that the youth do not seem more troubled or difficult to serve.

37% (78) of the programs chose not to respond or else answered that it is difficult to ascertain a general sense of whether their youth clients are more troubled. Some respondents noted that their youth may seem more multi-problem only because staff had improved in their abilities to recognize and serve such troubled youth, or the community has greater expectations of the programs and refers more difficult cases to them. Others noted that the runaway and homeless youth population has always been a multi-problemed group in need of a comprehensive service approach.

It is a strong testimony to the commitment which shelter staff and boards of directors have, that their follow-up responses focus on what they need in order to do their jobs better. Their belief in the worth and societal potential of these troubled young people leads them to identify the following program needs.

Staff training: 74% of the agencies cited the need for more specialized staff training to work with the complex problems of these youth and their families on issues such as suicide prevention, working with sexual abuse and incest victims, school failure, drug and alcohol abuse, and others.

Continuum of services: 72% of the agencies identified the need to extend their services into prevention and after care areas such as street outreach and follow up counseling. This need is consistent with the findings of the 1983 GAO report, "Federally Supported Centers Provide Needed Services For Runaways and Homeless Youths." Additional outreach services will identify troubled youth earlier so that preventive services can be more effective. Increased follow-up will increase the staying power of the services provided while the youth was at the center.

Independent Living Programs: 67% of the agencies expressed the need for independent living programs for their 16–18 year old youth who have little possibility of being reunited with their families or being adopted or placed in a foster home. Independent living programs provide safe living arrangements for their youth while teaching them life management skills and pre-employment skills. With an increasing number of throwaway and homeless youth, independent living components will become even more crucial components for runaway and homeless youth programs.

Capitol improvements of the shelter facility: 62% of the respondents cited the need for major maintenance and housing repair. Shelters need funds for these improvements in order to meet state and local health, fire, and safety codes as well as provide an appropriate environment for these young people to receive help.

Better salaries and more staff: 86% of the programs cited the need for more staff and for salary increases for all staff. Shelters operate 24 hours a day and work with youth and families under stress. It is a national disgrace that skilled and experienced staff who work long hours and often are on around the clock duty earn $8,000–$12,000/year. Volunteers are an important asset to programs, but they can only complement, not replace the staff.

A substantial number of programs have a number of service components that allow them to provide a continuum of care to youth and families, but a majority of programs and communities are in need of a more comprehensive approach so that youth do not fall through the cracks.

POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before I discuss the National Network's public policy issues, I want to first thank you, Mr. Chairman for your leadership and support last year on the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA-P.L. 98-473). As you well know, Title III of the JJDPA is the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. It is because of your work, and that of other members of this Subcommittee, that we are able to participate in this most important oversight hearing. You have earned our continued respect and appreciation.

It is this context of juvenile justice services that I raise the first public policy concern—the focus on "chronic runaway". The focus on habitual, chronic runaways has been stimulated by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Quite frankly, the National Network has several serious concerns about the way this issue has been framed and the implications for runaway centers. Whereas, the RHYA programs are administered by the Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF) in HHS, it is important to find out how much, if any, interagency cooperation and discussion has gone into the OJJDPA policy position.

Simply stated, the OJJDP position implies that because RHYA shelters are "non-secure" that is, the shelters have no physical barriers, bars, and locks to restrict the youth, that the shelters permit runaways to repeatedly run away. The implicit OJJDP inference is that if these runaway and other status offenders could be kept in secure or "staff secure" detention, their chronic running would necessarily cease. This notion obviously has serious implications for the deinstitutionalization mandates of the Juvenile Justice Act.

The National Network fully acknowledges the sincerity of the OJJDP position that some sort of forced detention for chronic runaways is predicated on protecting the youth from being harmed or harming themselves or others. The issue, however, is more involved. Furthermore, little if any, data exists to document the scope of the chronic runaway problem. The National Network's experience is that community-based, non-secure shelters effectively work with the vast majority of runaway and homeless youth. Those youth who are habitual runners do need specialized and intensive services, but it is unclear to me how court-ordered, secure or staff-secure programs guarantee the treatment needed by these youth. The National Network is eagerly awaiting a GAO Report on staff-secure facilities which is scheduled for release in October. We strongly recommend that this Subcommittee oppose any OJJPD policies to weaken the deinstitutionalization protections of runaways and other status offenders until this GAO Report receives through review.

I am personally convinced that this controversy over chronic runaways stems from the semantic differences and histories which the word "recidivism" has in the law enforcement and youth services communities respectively. For law enforcement, "recidivism", "chronic", and "habitual" are characteristics associated with the "offender". Ergo, it always is in a negative, law breaking context. Such is not the case with runaways. A very small percentage of chronic runaways run repeatedly from their homes and/or shelters. They most often are youth who are in need of careful assessment and mental health services. There are also chronic runaways and other homeless youth who return to shelters because they have learned that these are safe places where they can receive help and protection from the violence or chaos of their homes or the streets. This returning to safety is not a negative recidivism. Before any national policy is developed around chronic runaways (which could be susceptible to abuse by overly zealous law enforcement officials or communities that have not developed alternative services for youth), we need a better handle on the numbers of youth who fit into this special category and more knowledge about why they continue to run. ACYF must be involved in this process. The solution, I believe, lies in both services and treatment for the youth and for their families.

Another issue of great concern is the lack of clear definitions that distinguish between runaway children, homeless youth, missing children, throwaways, and those children who have been taken into custody by the state and been lost in the system or are emancipated before they are able to live self sufficient lives. Blurring of the distinctions between these categories of youth results in poor planning and ineffective programs. We strongly recommend that HHS and the Department of Justice work cooperatively with program providers to develop clear definitions and incident studies to inform their planning.

The remaining public policy issues of the National Network are described on pages 23-24 of our atached report. I want to direct the Committee's attention to the National Network's support of a National Youth Policy, patterned after the Older Americans Act. Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman and other members of the Subcommittee, that we are *not* proposing a new multi-billion dollar entitlement pro-

gram. Rather, we are raising the concept of a coordinated national, state, and local approach for providing youth and family services that best ensures the security and fiscal solvency of our nation. The National Network would be pleased to work with the members and staff of this Subcommittee on crafting a discussion paper for future hearings.

In closing, I want to emphasize two major needs of the RHYA programs. The first and foremost is the need for an increase in the federal appropriation. Currently, the program is funded at $23.25 million which support approximately 280 shelters and a select group of valuable research and demonstration projects and a hot line. Our estimates are that only 20% of the youth who need services get them, and there are many unserved and underserved cities and communities across the nation. While the National Network supports the expansion of services which ACYF has conducted during the past 2 years. We are most concerned that this expansion has come at the expense of existing runaway and homeless youth programs that have proven track records of effectiveness. We are now faced with new programs that have insufficient funds to begin operation and continuing programs that must lower the number of youth they can serve.

For the past three years, the National Network has recommended to Congress and the Administration an RHYA funding level of $50 million and we remain convinced that the need for these cost-effective, preventive services is now greater than ever. We also are fully cognizant of the budget and deficit pressures which this Congress and our nation face. For FY '86 a reasonable appropriation would be $30 million with hold harmless plus inflation for existing programs, sufficient funds for new programs, and funds to continue research, demonstration, and innovative model programs.

The second major need, which is a function of available funds, is specialized training for staff and volunteers. My testimony and that of the other witnesses discuss the complicated and often tragic world of drug and alcohol abuse, family dysfunction, sexual exploitation, and homelessness which these youth face. ACYF deserves a special mention for its effective use of RHYA funds in its discretionary and coordinated networking grants programs for the innovative service and training packages which these programs have produced. But the National Network's recent survey identifies specialized staff and volunteer training on helping youth and familie as a major program need which requires increased support.

On behalf of the National Network Board of Directors and 500 members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to support the Subcommittee's work in protecting our nation's youth and families.

Mr. KILDEE. We are especially pleased to have Mike Sturgis from Harris County, TX, as our next witness. Mike's a very special young man who has agreed to talk with us this morning about his experience with runaway shelters in Texas. Mike is accompanied by Dr. Ted Shorten, executive director of the Family Connection of Houston.

Mike, you may address this committee in any way you want by telling us what you feel will be helpful to us. I feel a certain closeness to you inasmuch as I have a son almost your age. He's 15 years old. You may proceed in any way you wish, Mike.

STATEMENT OF MIKE STURGIS, HARRIS COUNTY, TX; AND TED SHORTEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FAMILY CONNECTION, HOUSTON, TX

Mr. STURGIS. I'm here today to try to propose that we get more places and maybe more space for the kids that really need it, because there are a lot of people out there that aren't receiving services or are just scared to come in.

I think I'll start off by just telling my story.

Mr. KILDEE. Go ahead, Mike.

Mr. STURGIS. When I was living with my mother, by the age of about 10, my mother was a single parent, and she put a lot of re-

sponsibility on me as being like a little man in the house. I did a lot of stuff that kids that age would not normally do.

When my mom passed away, when I was 12, it was like a major downfall to me. Here I am—the real world—nobody to turn to. And it seemed like I was being rejected by just about everybody.

The legal guardian that was supposed to take custody of me denied the responsibility to take that responsibility. And I believe it was because he was more scared than I was.

I was immediately put into Harris County Protective Services. I was very frightened. I went in to Mr. Shorten's program, Family Connection. And that was the first place I went. And from that program I got a very good outlook of what it was going to be like for here on out.

Then when I moved to the more complex centers, it started getting worse, and I started to reject authority. When I went to the large center, that was the first time I ran away.

Life on the streets is not fun. Most people tell you, yeah, it's a blast, and, you know, have a good time, you can do anything you want. But there's a price to pay to do that.

Most of the people I've known have resulted into prostitution, or homosexuality, thievery, drugs, just doing all kinds of stuff just to make a little money to get by that day.

I was a different story. I'm kind of what you might call an outsider from the system. I went out and tried to make it for myself. Even though I slept outside in between cardboard boxes and carried my suitcase with me everywhere I went, I went and looked for jobs. And I was very fortunate to find a man that was kind enough to give me a job.

He knew I was a runaway, and he convinced me to go back. So, I went back.

I've run away six times since that time. Each time I have made it successfully without resorting to some drastic measure.

Right now, I'm 16 years old, and I've learned that the people that were telling me all this stuff that I was rejecting before, the same people, now, are going to help me get out on my own. And I don't reject authority any more. I feel that is one of my accomplishments, and I feel very comfortable about that.

Right now, I am attending a school that was recently opened up this year. It's called PAL. It's called Preparation for Adult Living. You go in and they help you get your GED. They teach you how to budget, all the things you're going to need to make it successfully on your own.

The kids that are in there are all underprivileged or in Protective Services or in foster homes and they're trying to get some benefit.

The program is really nice. And I was real lucky to get in because it was a last minute thing that they told me about. Just like coming to Washington was a last minute thing I found out about.

I'm attending the school. I have a 3.3 grade average in the GED classes right now. I feel I'm ready to take the GED now, but the minimum age is 17 and I have to wait till November to take that.

Right now, I'm working at Luther's Barbeque.

Normally, in the program, they would help me find a job. But having the enthusiasm that I do, I went out and found this one by

myself. The employer is a real nice guy. He's a strong believer in a runaway also. And I've told him my story also. And he's given me a lot of chances, even—you know, I make mistakes. But he's given me a lot of chances to succeed.

I plan, in the future, to—in fact, at the end of August, August 31, I'll be emancipated, have my own apartment, and successfully holding down a job.

I'm a success story because I started out the hard way and I've experienced what's really out there and now I'm fixing to experience it in a different way.

Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much, Mike. I appreciate your testimony. You've done a good job with yourself, really. You impress me very much.

Mike, from your experience, being out there on the street, and while you were able to avoid many of the things that children do fall in to, what do you think happens to, say, most of the people your age when they get out there in the street without any place to go?

Mr. STURGIS. I know most—most of the people, kids in Houston that run away, I happen to know them as close personal friends. They do resort to homosexuality and prostitution. That's like the big thing. They hang out at the corner, and they'll be thumbing a ride, and after they get the ride, then they go to this guy's pad, and to get a place to sleep tonight they have to pay a price. And that wasn't for me.

But I'd say that about 75 percent of the people I know do resort to homosexuality. Others, robbers, thieves, break into houses. And the other ones just hanging out.

Mr. KILDEE. After these young people say, submit themselves to things that they might even feel very ashamed of and feel that they've been degraded, how do you think that affects them for their future? What happens to them? Have you seen anything that you might speak to us about on that?

Mr. STURGIS. It does affect them. It's a—they—some people say, well, you know, like I was telling you, they'd say it was a blast, you know, to be out there and be out free and you don't have to listen to nobody. But I know that a lot of people have a lot of horrible memories about what's really going down out there.

And I'm really privileged. I would call myself privileged to be here to speak. I'm speaking for everybody that's out there right now that needs a place to stay.

Mr. KILDEE. Would you say there's a large number of adults out there who really are ready to exploit these young people?

Mr. STURGIS. Most definitely.

Mr. KILDEE. They recognize that these young people have a problem, and that they can be exploited. Are there people just out there preying and watching for young people who really are in need of shelter, and, therefore, there's an exchange?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes.

Mr. KILDEE. How common is it? How many? Is it difficult, I guess I'm trying to say, for a young person to find or run into somebody who's going to exploit them or hurt them?

Mr. STURGIS. No. In the streets of Houston, where I come from, if you're out late at night, you are a potential victim to anything.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mike.

Tom.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mike, for your testimony.

You indicated to us that you ran away the first time primarily because of rejection of authority.

Mr. STURGIS. Yes.

Mr. TAUKE. And then you met someone who was quite kind and talked you into going back. Why did you run away the second to the sixth times?

Mr. STURGIS. The rejection of authority, also. I have just recently learned how to accept authority.

Mr. TAUKE. Was there anything that could have been done in your case that would have made it possible for you to come back and stay without feeling that authority was so oppressive, that you would feel like running away again?

Mr. STURGIS. Maybe I didn't put out clear enough. The rejection of authority was on me. It wasn't the people that were given authority. They were telling me right. I just took it as wrong because I was a——

Mr. TAUKE. Yes. But looking back, you obviously ran away six times.

Mr. STURGIS. Yeah.

Mr. TAUKE. What could someone have done the first time you came back or the second time you came back that would have helped you so that you wouldn't have felt compelled to run away again?

Mr. STURGIS. Well, I have two suggestions. One. The places, some places, are real free. And they let you do a lot of things to be independent. My suggestion is that maybe some places should be a little bit more secure, maybe more staff people or closer supervision.

The other one is——

Mr. TAUKE. The place you were in—excuse me for interrupting. But was the place you were in secure or was it more free?

Mr. STURGIS. It was very secure.

Mr. TAUKE. OK. But you ran away anyway?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes.

Mr. TAUKE. OK. The second?

Mr. STURGIS. The second. I forgot what I was going to say.

Mr. TAUKE. I'm sorry for interrupting you.

Mr. STURGIS. Could you repeat the question, please?

Mr. TAUKE. It was suggestions as to what could be done in order to keep someone like you from running away a second time or a third time.

Well, maybe it will come back to you. You said you were in a relatively secure facility. Do you think you would have been more likely to stay if you had been in a facility that wasn't quite as secure, where you would have had more freedom to come and go?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes, I'll agree with that.

Mr. TAUKE. You would have been more likely to stay?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes.

Like I say, when I was with my mother, I had a lot of responsibility. And then I automatically come to a place where everything is—you have to listen to everybody, and you have to do what this person says, whether you think it's right or wrong, you know. And that's a big switch, and I had to learn how to accept that.

Mr. TAUKE. Those people who you met out in the street, young people like yourself, did most of them leave home, do you think, or leave wherever they were because of a rejection of authority? Or what was the reason that most left?

Mr. STURGIS. Most reasons, sexual abuse or rape, rejection from their parents, the parents just don't want to deal with them or don't pay enough attention to them.

Mr. TAUKE. Why would they not go to runaway shelters?

Mr. STURGIS. Probably because they don't know about them.

Mr. TAUKE. They don't know about them. How do we get the word out?

Mr. STURGIS. The network, newspapers, the National Runaway Hot Line. You can call that, and I am sure they could refer you to just about any shelter in the country.

That's about all. Yeah.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Mike, how many different shelters did you go to.

Mr. STURGIS. OK. Shelters or everything?

Mr. KILDEE. Well, everything. And then you can tell us the various places that you went to.

Mr. STURGIS. OK. When I was first admitted into Harris County Child Welfare, I went to Family Connection, stayed there for 30 days. I was admitted into Chimney Rock Center for another 30 days. And then I went to a permanent placement called—well, it was a foster—excuse me. I went to a foster home, which didn't work out. And I was admitted back into CRC. I stayed there about 2 months. And, then, from CRC to another permanent place called Clairewood. I stayed there for 2 years. That's my most longlasting placement. I learned a lot from that place. I learned how to deal with people, skills, how to follow instructions, how to accept criticism.

You could only stay there 2 years. So, that's the maximum time limit. I think that time limit should be extended.

From there I went to Galveston Youth Shelter and then to the Brazoria County Youth Shelter. Both of those stays were 30 days long.

I was admitted into a working ranch called Lone Oak Ranch. And I stayed there for about 4 months. And that didn't work out.

From all those places I just named, I was rejecting authority. And then when I went back to CRC I started shaping up. This was this year, I think about February.

From there I went to a place called Hill Country Youth Ranch. That offered me a lot also. I got—I now believe in God. In the beginning, you know, well, he was nothing. You know, if he can't help me with this, then he can't help with nothing. Now, I have Christ in my life, and I know that I could turn all my problems over to Him and anything can be taken care of.

It didn't work out at first. And I went back to CRC. I was readmitted for a second chance to this place. I did make it work out the second time.

Hearing about the PAL Program, I requested to be transferred back to Houston. I went back to Houston, back to CRC. I was admitted in to the PAL Program. And the CRC has their own little standards. They didn't think it was right for me to be able to go out and do what I wanted to, because, like I said, this is a fairly secure place—go out and do what I want to and, you know, to trust me that much. They didn't want to put that much trust into me because they have known my past record.

So, I was transferred to Family Connection. And that's where I am now. I'm successfully attending the school, successfully working down a job. And I'm fixing to successfully maintain my own apartment.

Mr. KILDEE. Apparently, some of the places where you went or were placed were better than others. Can you help us, maybe, in understanding why some were better than others? What were some of the things that were better that helped you?

Mr. STURGIS. As I was mentioning, the Clairewood Program offered me a lot of stuff. That's because it is more like a family and not like an institution. I think the family setting is what helped me because that was what I was used to. I did not reject these people. They were really, really nice. And seeing as how I don't have a mother or father of my own, I've taken these people as to be my mother and father. That's how special this place is. You really—it's not just a place where you go and stay and eat and sleep. It's a place where you learn and learn to love.

Mr. KILDEE. Let me ask you this if you can respond to this. Were there certain places where you could feel that they really respected you more and had some regard for you more? Did that help any, where you could feel that respect and regard for yourself?.

Mr. STURGIS. Yes. That placement had more respect for me than I did for myself.

Mr. KILDEE. And that was helpful to you to feel that people did respect you and had regard for you?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes. And now I'm respected all across the system now because I'm making it. I'm making it work out for myself.

Mr. KILDEE. You mentioned that some of the places had more respect for you than you had for yourself. Have you been helped in that? Obviously, you have. You have come through a great deal and have emerged quite well. Have you been helped in that self-respect by some of these programs?

Mr. STURGIS. Yes. Yes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Petri.

Mr. PETRI. I don't know if there's an answer to this or not. But I was just kind of interested in one aspect of your testimony. It's the religious aspect of your reference to the shelter or the residence that helped you a lot. Do you think that's what you have heard generally to be the case, that if there is a strong religious content they are better? Or do they vary a lot, too?

Mr. STURGIS. They do vary. In my own personal opinion, exempting my case, is that most teenagers will reject religion just because that's what's hip.

But I was different. I take things as they come. And I really am glad that I took that one.

Mr. PETRI. But when the Federal Government or other governmental units decide on funding shelters or different facilities for runaways do you feel, other things being equal, that if you can only fund one you should try to fund one that's operated by a religious group? Or would you think that it wouldn't be a controlling factor?

Mr. STURGIS. Most of the shelters that I have been to do offer some kind of religion. The religion is offered by volunteers that come. And they work on a one-to-one basis with every kid in there. It's a really good program to have religion in the system. We need it.

Mr. PETRI. Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Mike, in my 21 years I've listened to a lot of experts on programs. You certainly have helped me a great deal, and you've given me some insight. I appreciate your testimony. I think you've done a really good job with yourself. You've got some help from people. And I can tell you have that selfrespect which is very important. And I think any governmental program has to uphold people's dignity in that respect. You have given us an insight that we could not have gotten from all the Ph.D's in the world.

Perhaps someday you'll be back here as a Ph.D. yourself, Mike, testifying to us in some other capacity.

But I personally appreciate this testimony. Your testimony, you know, will become part of the record of this committee so we can try to serve the young people of this country in a better fashion, try to get programs that will really, you know, meet the needs of people like yourself when you are out there on the street.

You have been helpful to the committee, but, more importantly, you have been helpful to the young people of this country, and I appreciate that very much. We may be calling upon you again in the future, Mike.

Mr. STURGIS. OK.

Mr. KILDEE. OK.

I think I'll have Dr. Shorten remain at the table. He'll be part of the next panel.

Mike, you can stay up there or whatever you want. And we'll bring the other panelists up, then, too. Whatever you want to do, Mike.

Mr. STURGIS. Well, let me step outside here.

Mr. KILDEE. Joining Dr. Shorten, now, at the table will be Mr. Dick Moran, executive director of the Miami Bridge, Miami, FL; Ms. Twila Young, community education coordinator of the Iowa Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Youth Services Network, Inc., from Ames, IA.

OK. Dr. Shorten, do you want to start?

Mr. SHORTEN. Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

I'm coming here today to talk from two perspectives. First of all, as the director of Family Connection. And we are the oldest emergency shelter in Houston. We just completed—well, we just celebrated our 15th anniversary on June 21 of this year. And the second perspective is as a runaway myself.

Unfortunately, when I ran away from home, we did not have emergency shelters. As a matter of fact, I had not heard of that concept at that time. And, so, I've more or less dedicated myself to working in this type of business because I know of the experiences that I had as a child, and now I see the experiences of people like Mike and the other individuals who come through our shelter.

So, I'm very pleased to be here, very thankful to have this opportunity to provide testimony to you.

Family Connection is a therapeutic emergency shelter. That within itself is a new concept in this business. Fifteen years ago, the majority of kids who came to our shelter came in search of a new adventure. Today, overwhelmingly, 95 percent of the kids in our shelter are kids who have been abused, either physically, or sexually, or emotionally. And the tragedy of that is that these individuals have been abused by the adults that they love the most, their parents, their babysitters, their teachers, and other relatives.

And I'm thinking of that. And this, again, is a slight deviation from my testimony, but you will receive a copy of my statement, more or less in line with what I'm saying now. The tragedy, again, is the fact that, when you take a child like Mike, and you ask him why did he reject authority—well, if you were abused or if you were abandoned, if you were neglected by people who loved you the most, how easy is it for you to respect people that you do not know?

So, we in the shelter business have a definite problem of trying to go inside of the mind set of young people who have been hurt and who are suffering, and they were hurt by the people that they know.

Last year, we provided services to 300 youth in our shelter, 300 bed spaces—I mean 300 kids were served in our beds. Additionally, we served 1,500 kids through our community outreach program.

When we look at our kids, 55 percent of them are female, 45 percent of them are male. Fifty percent are white, 24 percent are black, 24 percent are Hispanic, and 1 percent we say others.

Houston is experiencing a rapid demographic change. And, so, we are receiving large numbers of people from Central America, Mexico, and areas like that.

In terms of our services, I did say that we were therapeutic in the sense that each child who comes to the Family Connection is assigned to a primary counselor. And it becomes the responsibility of that counselor to develop an individual treatment plan of service for that child.

Now, if you take a child like Mike, who came to us because of the fact that he wanted to work, what happened is that in the shelter that Mike was in prior to coming to Family Connection they did not allow their youth to leave the grounds to go out and work. And we do have a very extensive employment program in our shelter. So, therefore, we were very glad to accept him for that very reason.

So, we provide individual therapy, group therapy, and family therapy. Because, as our name says, Family Connection, we do want to reunite the kids with their families if at all possible.

One of the things that I'm most proud of in terms of Family Connection is the training that we do that we call survival skill train-

ing. We teach individuals how to purchase food, how to prepare meals, how to budget their moneys, how to write their resumes, how to apply for a job, how to secure a job, how to maintain a job once they get it.

We teach them how to maintain good personal hygiene and how to keep their living areas clean.

When I talk about the needs of Family Connection, I have to echo the things that June Bucy said. We have a change in clientele. We have kids with multiple problems. So, therefore, number one, we have to, number one, hire better quality staff.

At the last count, I think I was the lowest paid shelter director in the State of Texas. So, you don't go into this business with the expectation of making money. And it's hard for me to say to staff, come and join me in this mission, but I promise you you'll never get rich, and I promise you you probably won't be able to pay your bills.

So, we need to hire more quality staff, realizing that we don't have money to pay them. We need to provide extensive training just to keep up with the change in the client personnel.

And, then, too, I was glad to hear June talk about the issue of research. Our population is changing. Again, we moved from 100 percent pure runaways to the fact, now, over 80 percent of our kids are system kids, which means they are in the custody of the Harris County Children Protective Services or the Texas Youth Council. Now, the Texas Youth Council is our juvenile correction authority.

So, the State is the parent of the majority of kids who come through our center.

So, my recommendations would follow these needs. One is that we would like, you know, for the Federal Government to give us more money.

And it was interesting, when we talk about the pie in June Bucy's testimony. Last year, I met an individual who served on the review panel for our grant. And he said, that was the best grant that I've ever read in my life, and there's no doubt that you're doing quality work. But there's a new program that's opening up in the Valley. And, so, we had to take $35,500 out of your budget—you know, out of what we would give you—so that we could fund that program.

Well, I'm glad that there's a program in the Valley. And I know there are kids in the Valley who need services. But, by the same token, to take $53,500 out of my budget to fund another program does me very little good. As a matter of fact, it hurts my program.

So, thank you very much.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Ted Shorten follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THEODORE SHORTEN, PH.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE FAMILY CONNECTION, HOUSTON, TX

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Dr. Theodre B. Shorten, Director of The Family Connection in Houston, Texas. The Family Connection is Texas's oldest emergency shelter for runaway, homeless, and other troubled children and youth.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored and pleased to testify today at this oversight hearing on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the Texas youth services community is most grateful for your leadership

and the Subcommittee's work on behalf of the children, youth and families our programs serve.

The Family Connection is a therapeutic emergency youth shelter and runaway outreach prevention program. We provide at least one night of shelter to more than 300 youth annually and our outreach staff serves 1,500 youth in the community each year.

Our agency is responding to a dramatic shift in the nature of our clientele, and in talking with other youth shelter directors around shift the country, my strong sense is that they are seeing the same. Specifically, 15 years ago all of our clients were youth who had run to the streets in search of a new adventure. Today, approximately 80% of the youth we see are "systems kids" and/or those youth fleeing their homes because of abuse and neglect. Systems kids, Mr. Chairman, are those young people who have been involved with the Harris County Protective Services Agency, Texas Youth Council (our state juvenile corrections office), or other public child care service agencies.

Many of these youths have no homes and their legal custody is with the state. Most of them have "multi-layer" problems, e.g. sexual victimization, physical abuse, abandonment by their natural families, drugs and alcohol abuse, school failure, and others. They are running and on the street because they are seeking a higher quality of life. 95% of The Family Connection's clients have histories of abuse—sexual, physical, or emotional. These youth were abused by those adults they loved and trusted the most—their parents, babysitters, teachers, and other relatives. Many of these youth once they got on the streets, become victims of pedophiles or involved in juvenile prostitution.

It is important that the Subcommittee know that these youth come from families representing every income level, ethnic group, and type of community. The racial breakdown for The Family Connection's clients last year was 50% White, 25% Black, 24% Hispanic, 1% Others. 55% of our youth were female, 45% male.

The Family Connection is proud of the individual treatment and services which we provide to each youth. We offer individual, group and family counseling, and therapy. These services are the essential first steps in helping the youth redirect their lives and to start the family reunification process. Many of these youth, especially the systems kids, have no homes to return to or the breakdown in their families has been so complete that reunification is highly unlikely. For these youth, we provide survival skill training so that they can develop and maintain an independent living situation. These survival skill services include food shopping and meal preparation, money management, finding and keeping a job, personal hygiene, and other personal living skills. In providing all of our services, we make extensive use of volunteers (more than 300 last year) and work closely with police, juvenile court, and other private agencies.

It is in the context of the troubled families that we work with and the comprehensive services that we provide that I want to discuss the needs of The family Connection. Again Mr. Chairman, my discussions with my colleagues across the country lead me to believe that their programmatic and funding needs are the same as The Family Connection's. Our needs also are consistent with those of other shelters as validated in the recent survey conducted by the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services. In order to maintain and improve our services to Houston's troubled youth, we need:

More bed space: The Family Connection's crisis intervention services need more beds so that the youth who are contacted by our outreach team can have an alternative to the streets. With additional beds, we could save some of the 1500 other young people that our outreach team works with.

More quality staff and staff training: The multi-layer problems of these young people and their families require skilled and experienced staff on a 24 hour basis. The kind of counseling and follow-up services these youth and families need requires a great deal of energy and patience. Regrettably, these staff are severely underpaid (degreed counselors earn $12,000-$14,000 per year) and often leave after a few years. These staff are our country's best defense in keeping troubled youth away from future crime, institutionalization, and welfare dependency. My staff has earned a share of the savings which they give the taxpayers.

Specialized training for staff and volunteers is another critical need. The complex problems and causes of drug abuse, incest, family dysfunction, and the other multi-layer problems I have discussed entail appropriate and refined therapeutic responses. Staff and volunteers need ongoing training on these and other problem areas if they are to provide effective services.

A research component: My emphasis here is on applied research and data systems. The Family Connection needs the resources to maintain a research and eval-

uation component in order to analyze the problems of our youth and families. Such information will enable us to design more preventive and cost-effective services. This information also would be valuable to other shelters across the nation in helping them analyze trends and develop responsive service plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

My recommendations to the Subcommittee are derived directly from the service needs I have just described. Obviously, meeting these needs requires sufficient funds from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act appropriation and from other state, local and other private sources. My strong recommendation to Congress and the administration is that funding for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act be increased *at least* by 15% over the FY'85 amount of $23.25 million. Furthermore, existing, federally funded shelter programs with a successful track record should not have their funding levels cut in order to start up new programs. While I am pleased that the Department of Health and Human Services sees the expansion of services to runaway and homeless youth as a major priority, new funds must be made available for such expansion. To take money from one community to serve another community only means that less youth will be served in the first program.

My final recommendation is two-fold and also involves the wise allocation of scarce public resources. RHYA funds should be increased to support staff and volunteer training and to support independent living programs. Independent living programs are the only viable option for those older adolescents who have little chance of being placed in foster care or some kind of alternative family situation. Independent living programs promote self-sufficiency of the youth through a package of pre-employment training, counseling, and other supportive services. Unless we provide such long-term (12–18 months) services to those youth, America can be assured that our welfare rolls, crime rates, and adult homeless population will continue to expand and require even greater fiscal demands.

Thank you again Mr. Chairman for this opportunity to testify. The Family Connection will be pleased to continue working with you and the members of the Subcommittee in meeting the needs of our nation's troubled youth and families.

STATEMENT OF TWILA YOUNG, FAMILY YOUTH COORDINATOR, IOWA RUNAWAY, HOMELESS, AND MISSING YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK, INC.; AND DICK MORAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MIAMI BRIDGE, MIAMI, FL

Ms. YOUNG. I guess I'm next.

Mr. KILDEE. Ms. Young.

Ms. YOUNG. My name is Twila Young. I am with the Iowa Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Youth network. That network is made up of three discrete youth servicing agencies in central and southcentral Iowa. I am an employee of one of those agencies, Youth and Shelter Services. The other two agencies in that network are South Central Youth and Family Services and the Youth Emergency Services and Shelter.

By forming this network, we have within the bounds of the area that we serve—it's a relatively large portion of the State. It's one-fifth of the State. It comprises 18 counties. And we have metropolitan Des Moines, which is Polk County, sitting in the middle of that. And it's surrounded by a tremendously rural part of the State, very sparsely part of the State populated area.

Because of that, we have a variety of experiences. You have several people talking to you today about what goes on in urban areas.

So, even though Des Moines is included in our network, I would like to concentrate my remarks on what happens in the very rural areas.

First of all, we've been talking this morning about numbers and how difficult it is to get a handle on numbers. And, so, I'm going to say, once again, I don't know how you get a handle on this particu-

lar number. But I think that it's very important to remember that, first of all, a significant portion of the young people who turn up in our cities as runaways have come from rural areas. These are kids who have gone to cities, in most cases, as a last resort.

When a young person in a rural area, a very small town, or a farm, or a sparsely populated area decides that the home environment that they are living in is so disruptive and dangerous or emotionally difficult for them to deal with, running away to a city is not the first choice that they make. They run away to a house down the street. They run away to a grandparent's house. They run away to a car. They run away to the K.C. Store, a convenience store.

Many of these kids continue to go to school. The counselors see them. They stay in that community. They, in June's words, hang around.

What they want to do is go home. They don't want to go somewhere else. They're looking for a way to resolve those family issues in their home. And that's not happening. And when that situation becomes insupportable to them, then, generally as a last resort, they will leave that home community.

And once, as you know, they hit the Interstate Highway System, they get to the cities very, very quickly.

What we try to do in the network, the rural network, is to provide services, prevention services, early intervention services, counseling, crisis intervention, family resolution services, within that home community, that keeps that young person from having to leave that community to get the kind of services, and safety, and shelter that they need.

We do this with an outreach system, a community volunteer network system, emergency foster home systems, all of these. These systems can and do work very well in sparsely populated areas. They can be very cost effective. But they do require a certain amount of money, a certain amount of professional attention in terms of crisis intervention. And certainly they require a significant kind of backup with the shelters and the long-term family counseling that some of these people are going to need.

That's kind of how we work.

One of the things that—there are a couple of points that I'd like to make about needs in terms of dealing with runaways, particularly in our rural areas, but somewhat in general.

First of all, the special problems that we face in rural areas have a lot to do with, as I said, the sparse population. It is very, very difficult in a county where the total population of the county may be only 5,000 or 10,000 people. It is very, very difficult to provide 24-hour access. We do that with some creative ways. We use beepers and we use all kinds, collect phone call numbers, and all kinds of ways to provide 24-hour access. But that is a very difficult thing to do.

The other problem is transportation. Again, in these sparsely populated areas, as you know, very often a single sheriff's deputy may be the only emergency services available to the entire county in the middle of the night on a Wednesday night. That sheriff's deputy cannot leave that county to take that young person to a shelter in another county. And, so, some sort of transportation,

either to emergency foster homes or to shelter or to something to help that young person immediately, at the moment of crisis, is very critical and very, very difficult to provide under the system that we have.

So, that kind of logistical recognition of the differences between rural and urban is very, very important.

I also think that it's very, very critical to provide consistently throughout our country, to our rural and our urban areas, the baseline kinds of prevention, early intervention, and crisis intervention services. Not every community needs a shelter. Not every community needs a fully licensed family counseling center. That's not what we need.

Every family, every community needs some kind of access, though, to prevention and early intervention so that the number and complexity of our other services can be reduced or can be provided in those areas and on a basis in which they are needed.

One other point I'd like to make, and that's about the chronic and habitual runaways. These are kids with serious problems. They are kids with multiple problems. They are kids who run away. In our experience, these are kids who are demonstrating that they are running away from shelters, from services. We see them. We know who they are. They are the same kids who are running over and over and over again. And we need to do something about that. And we don't have the means or the body of knowledge or the, frankly, funding level to address the special needs of these kids.

And, at present, what's happening is, when the public thinks of runaways, it is these people that they are thinking of. And these are a group. This is a group of kids that very badly need services. And we need to learn about them, and we need to learn how to serve them better. But we don't need to assume that all runaways are like that, that those are the kinds of services, that's what we need to be doing with all runaways.

We have a huge number, a huge percentage. Ninety percent of runaways are simply kids who want to go home, but they cannot because there is abuse, there is alcoholism, there is tremendous family stress, something going on with that family that precludes that kid successfully returning.

And we need to be addressing that family system and helping that kid get back in touch with his or her family, and, at the same time, doing some very specific and in-depth kinds of examination and developmental case management for kids who have serious emotional and mental health problems.

Thank you.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Ms. Young.

[Prepared statement of Twila M. Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TWILA M. YOUNG, YOUTH AND SHELTER SERVICES, INC., AMES, IOWA

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you some of the problems facing young people and families in the rural areas of our country. I would like also to discuss some of the ways we in central Iowa are trying to address those problems, and some of the unmet needs that exist in our rural communities.

Youth and Shelter Services (YSS) had its genesis nearly fifteen years ago as a volunteer effort on the part of ordinary citizens in Story County, Iowa, who believed that troubled, homeless young people deserved safety and shelter. During the inter-

vening years, YSS has grown to become a professional, multi-faceted organization which serves six central Iowa counties with a variety of substance abuse and family crisis prevention, intervention and treatment services. But the underpinnings of the agency continue to be its connection with the community, the commitment of its volunteers and Board and a belief that at times of family crisis, the family itself and the community which surrounds that family offer the best sources of healing, strength and ultimate resolution of the crisis.

Two years ago, recognizing the need to focus services on rural young people who are contemplating running away from home and those who have already run, YSS established, with South Central Youth and Family Services, the Iowa Runaway, Homeless and Missing Youth Network. With funding from the Runaway Youth Act, the network developed a system across its 17-county coverage area to identify, within their home communities, runaway youth and their families and to provide services within the very rural portions of that area. Last year, Youth Emergency Services and Shelter, which serves Polk County (metropolitan Des Moines) joined the network.

At present, the network covers roughly one-fifth of the State, and represents the Des Moines metropolitan area and 18 surrounding counties including the convergence of Interstate Highways 35 and 80. The population of this 10,000 square miles is 665,000 and nearly one-half of these people live in one of those counties (Polk-population 305,000).

This is rural farm land, characterized by family farms, small towns of 500 to 10,000 in population, consolidated school systems, police protection provided in many cases only by county sheriff's departments, little or no community resources for families in crisis.

In many of those communities, the juvenile court system and the state social service agency (the Iowa Department of Human Services) offer the only avenue of help for troubled families. These systems are over-worked and under-staffed and are able to address only those cases which grossly threaten the physical safety of a child, which involve the violation of laws and which disrupt the community. Assistance from these systems is possible only after official action is taken to bring that child and/or that family under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. Very few states, and Iowa is not one of them, can offer assistance to families in need without first involving them in the formal juvenile justice or child protection system.

We have built in a catch-22: In order for our official "system" to help a family in crisis, that crisis has to have grown to unmanageable proportions ane entails court involvement. The resolution at that point becomes prohibitively time-consuming and costly. For many youth and families, by that time, the schism has grown too wide to bridge.

When we speak of runaways in the rural areas of Iowa, who are we talking about? First, it is important to remember that they are our children. They came from the families of our friends, our neighbors, our relatives. They come from our own families. Running away from home is a symptom, and it can be a symptom of many kinds of family dysfunciton. A runaway may be reacting to physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

A youth may be running from the trauma of a family farm or business lost to the crumbling rural economy or trying to escape the chaos of an alcoholic family. A runway may have reached the end of his or her own rope in a personality or value clash many months or years in the making. The problems of runaways are the same problems that other troubled teenagers have. The difference is that this young person chooses running as the way to deal with those problems. One thing that runaways generally do have in common is their perception of their alternatives. For the most part, they see none. A runaway is a young person who sees no choices for solving problems, except running away from them.

In rural areas, running often follows a pattern during which clues are given and intervention points exist. Typically, a young person will leave home three to five times before leaving the community. These first running episodes are rarely recognized as such, and generally take the person to a relative or friend's house. While these events generally do not jeopardize the youth, it is equally unusual for any material change to occur in the family situation as a result of this action. Consequently, when that child's community resources are exhausted, that child is likely to leave the community. It is generally at this point that the child is recognized as a runaway, but at this point the community loses the opportunity to affect that child's life. What remains is a family in crisis and a child on the road.

Once the young person has left his or her home community, the movement away from the small town and toward a city is quite rapid. While our rural communities are in many ways sheltered, and transportation across counties is often undepend-

able, life on the Interstate is a fast-moving affair. Rural runaways quickly reach Des Moines, Kansas City, Omaha, Minneapolis and Chicago. It is not the role of my testimony, nor within the scope of my personal experience to discuss what happens to vulnerable young people from rural areas who find themselves alone and friendless in our cities. It is my firm belief, however, that we have it in our power to significantly reduce the number of young people leaving their home communities and running to cities.

The Iowa Runaway, Homeless and Missing Youth Network has developed a process to identify runaways at various intervention points in the family's experience leading to and immediately following a running incident. This process is predicated on several basic tenets. First, the community needs to know why young people run away from home. They need to know that virtually all adolescents are at risk for running incidents, and that we can recognize and identify the clues that tell us a child is in fact preparing to run away not only from home, but from the community. Second, a community network of concerned volunteers can be assembled and trained to provide prevention, intervention and emergency services to families in communities where professional services are limited or non-existent. Third, while rural law enforcement agencies, in our experience, are eager to help troubled youth, young people on the run are not trusting of sheriff's deputies and policemen; consequently, only a portion (probably about one-third) of runaways come to the attention of police officials. Fourth, families in crisis are family who are most ready to change, grow and accept help in resolving problems. Finally, time and distance are the critical elements: the longer a young person is away and the farther they run from home, the harder it is to bring that family back together.

These basic tenets provide us with an operational model which calls for heavy emphasis on community education, early identification, volunteer network building and round-the-clock availability of professional crisis intervention. To accomplish this requires a committed outreach worker who is willing to carry a beeper around the clock for weeks at a time. It requires publicity and materials to identify and train a network of community volunteers. It requires unending recruitment to build a system of emergency foster care homes. It requires coordination with distant agencies to ensure a solid backup of shelter care and family counseling. In the 1984-85 fiscal year, using this model, the network served 357 runaways. Most of these young people spent only a few nights in a shelter or emergency foster home, and the services provided by the network enabled many of them to stay within their own community throughout the crisis intervention and family resolution process.

However, there are many Iowa counties without formal services to runaways and their families. Often, the simple logistics of providing service to rural runaways present some of the stickiest problems. In a county where the largest town has 5,000 people and the only phone answered in the middle of the night is at the sheriff's office, who does a young person on the run call? Suppose that young person does turn up in the hands of the deputy. There are many counties in Iowa where the middle of the night, in the middle of the week finds a single sheriff's deputy providing the entire complement of emergency services available to that county. A young person running away from abuse and in need of transportation to a shelter several counties away will have to wait. Just as the sheriff's deputy is often the only person available to that runaway, the deputy's options, as well, are limited. Returning a runaway to the same home environment they left, or leaving them on the street may be the only alternatives.

To provide the kinds of close-to-home services that these young people need and deserve in sparsely-populated areas is extremely difficult. These are small communities whose budgets are traumatized by the sinking farm economy, and threatened with the demise of revenue sharing. They simply do not have the money for these kinds of services.

Let me state the obvious as my first suggestion for strengthening the Runaway, Homeless and Missing Youth Act: More money. At present, the number of dollars allocated to any one state fall woefully short of the funds necessary to provide even minimal service to runaway youth and their families. Second, I am a firm believer in the value of the competitive bidding process as a health method for encouraging creative, cost-effective programs. However, within that process, a more equitable distribution of services needs to be developed. Under the present system, the money literally goes to whatever part of the state happens to have an agency capable of responding to a complicated and demanding request for proposals. Unfortunately, runaways do not conveninently arrange themselves within the catchment areas of efficient and effective youth serving agencies. At minimum, prevention, early intervention and crisis intervention services should be provided for in all geographical areas. Third, rural areas need to be recognized as the source of many runaways who

surface in our cities. Because of this, emphasis should be placed on funding rural prevention and early intervention projects.

At the same time, the special difficulties faced in providing transportation and 24-hour availability should be factored into the fund distribution formula. Finally, we need a renewed understanding and commitment on the part of the federal government that young people who are reporting abuse, alcoholism, emotional pain and family dysfunction by their running behavior need to be listened to. We need to respond to that family at their time of crisis, at the time when that family is most able to change and grow. We need to help that family become the functioning, nurturing environment that child needs. Responsive, non-punitive action, early in that young person's running process can help keep that young person in his or her community, and away from the streets and jails that pave the road to a shattered life.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Moran.

Mr. MORAN. Thank you. My name is Dick Moran, and I'm the executive director of Miami Bridge, which is a runaway shelter operated by Catholic Community Services in the Archdiocese of Miami.

We are the largest center in the State of Florida. We have been in existence since 1975. And we serve a little over 600 children in residence a year.

There are some unique things about our program that I would like to talk about for a minute. I have some testimony to submit, too, for the record.

Mr. KILDEE. It will be put in the record.

Mr. MORAN. It's much longer than we have here.

But some interesting things are that the the average age of the children we see, like most centers, is 15 years, 4 months. We are not talking about the older juvenile. We are talking about younger children. The average age being 15 years and 4 months.

The average stay in our runaway shelter is 12.7 days. We are not a therapy program. We are, like most runaway shelters, we are to runaway children in the street and to homeless children what the emergency room is to a hospital. We have a variety of problems in a very short period of time and come up with some kind of a plan.

That requires, with the kinds of children that you've just heard that we're seeing, the more and more multiproblem child, better staff.

We have a staff of three master's level counselors. Unfortunately, we are unable to keep them. They get a lot of experience, and they go out and make a lot more money some place else. They have wonderful contacts every place in town.

That is true of most centers around the country. We get people who have a lot of feeling and a lot of spirit, but after awhile you can't live on that, especially as they get older and get married and have children.

What we see in our center——

Mr. KILDEE. Dick, if you'll be patient with us, we'll go over and vote right away. We'll be back in about 7 minutes. OK?

Mr. MORAN. Be my guest.

Mr. KILDEE. Take a break and we'll be right back. Thank you.

Mr. MORAN. That's awfully speedy.

Mr. KILDEE. We exaggerate sometimes around here.

[Recess.]

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Moran, you can pick up where you were interrupted.

Mr. MORAN. Certainly.

At any rate, what happens is that most of the children that we do see, 80 percent of our children end up in a positive placement; 40 percent of the children we see go back to families.

Now, not all the children we see have families. And that's why we're talking about homeless and street kids who don't have a family to reunite to.

For the children who come into a runaway center who have families, about 72 percent that come into our program go back with families. What's important is that it's not just the runaway that we work with, it is a family, and that most children run away because they can't deal with what's happening in the family. That is, it is not an alternative of there is not the resources there to resolve the problem as they see it.

Only 119 out of 589 children ran away from our program, split, left prematurely against the advice of the program. That's 20 percent. I venture to say that if Joe Theismann today, this year, completes 80 percent of his passes, you'll be in the Super Bowl in Washington. That is not a bad percentage for a program.

Statistically, in 12 programs in the State of Florida, we have a 15-percent runaway rate from the programs. We have an 85-percent average that get reunited with family or to positive placement. That means that runaway centers in Florida and runaway centers around the Nation are working.

There's some problems though. You've addressed some of them and other people have already talked to them. Runaway centers do not operate in vacuums. There is a very strong linkage with many runaway centers and in Florida, especially in Dade County, with the law enforcement and the Juvenile Justice Programs. We don't operate independently of them, and they don't operate independently of us.

Last year, in our center, 152 children were brought by police. Three hundred and something were referred by social service agencies. Sixty-five children walked in the door.

The kinds of referrals are not just children themselves. They are not just families themselves. The system is involved in it.

The law enforcement relationships between our program I think are exemplary. And those are something I would like to spend a minute talking about.

We work with the major police departments in our community. We have a problem in Dade County. We have 26 municipal police departments and one public safety department. But we work with the major ones.

A runaway center—like we are involved in the training police department personnel in the academy. We are doing a video presentation to be used by police in working with runaways and with juveniles. And this has increased the number of referrals that police are able to work with on the streets in our community. And this is important. And I think that one of the things that ought to be in our mandates for funding is to develop those kind of linkages with law enforcement and juvenile justice systems.

We have another unique thing that I think we ought to take a look at in centers. We have a full educational component. Our program has an alternative school. We have two full-time teachers. We have a special education teacher that is provided 2 days a

week. This is provided by the Board of Public Instruction. There is a State law that says that children under 16 years old have to be in school. This was not able to happen for most children until we got an alternative education system.

One thing that's constant in all of their children's lives that we see is school. Now, they may not have been responsive to this school that they were going to, but it is a constant in their lives and it will be till 16. And, as Mike realizes, as you get older, it becomes even more essential to get a job and to survive and so forth.

That is something that perhaps we ought to pay a little bit more attention to, and that is the educational needs of our children.

We have gotten support not only through the public school system, but the Episcopal diocese of Miami gave us money for computers. And we have a computer lab of six computers to do assessment and to do instructions.

We need to have some special resources for the very special children we're seeing. If you do your fractions well enough and quick enough with the computer, we'll give you a minute of Star Wars as an immediate reward.

The computer doesn't shuffle, in turn, if you don't understand the instructions. It doesn't demean you. It doesn't get upset at you.

We have the assistance of two full-time teachers. But we have the assistance of this kind of technology because our kids are special.

Our school program has three very simple concepts. You will learn one thing new every day. You will succeed in one thing every day. And you will learn how to behave a little better. And our object is to try and reunite you, to reenter you into the school system, when we get you back into whatever the appropriate placement is, whether it's family, or foster home, or whatever is the positive placement.

And I think that's an important thing that we ought to take a look at and begin to see what kinds of things can happen in programs.

I think we're also pretty proud of our counseling program. We have three master's level counselors. We have a working agreement with the local hotline to do some of the referrals, and do some early intervention, and to do some of the followup long-term family counseling.

We have linkages with the juvenile justice system when we—we are not allowed to place children in a foster home, but we can utilize the State system to do this. What's happening, unfortunately, is we don't have the placement options for these multiproblem children that we see that we used to have. They are not available in the system. Foster homes are diminishing. We need to come up with some other alternatives. The backbone of foster homes in the United States was primarily women. As they move into the work force, there are not the availability of women at home to be foster parents, so we need to look at some other alternatives.

In our community, unfortunately, too many foster homes are foster homes for economic reasons and not for the reasons that they care and love kids. So, we need to look at some other alternatives there.

There is one alternative that I think we need to look at in future funding, and that is the independent living process, to take children who are 16, 17 years old and prepare them for independent living. That they are going to have to take care of themselves because the system is not able to do it, and has not been able to do it, and, unfortunately, probably will not be able to do it. We need to begin to get programs that will cover those kinds of things.

You can't do it by taking a State allocation that says this State receives *x* amount of money, but we recognize the need for more programs, so we're going to chip away at everybody and give somebody else some money.

I have been on the executive committee and the board of the Southeast Network and of the Florida Network since their inceptions. And the Bridge is a charter member of the National Network. We started in 1974. Our program started in 1975.

What's happened this past year. In Tennessee, they funded a program for $20,000. What can be done for $20,000? But that $20,000 came at the expense of $1,000 to Memphis, $8,000 to Nashville, $8,000 to Chattanooga, and $3,000 to Knoxville—proven programs who get cut down.

In Florida, they funded a new program in Tampa. They took money away from Fort Myers, they took money away from Fort Lauderdale. It was a bad year for the Forst. They took money away from both of those programs.

In Alabama they funded. They went from three programs to four. But they chipped away at the three programs in Alabama.

In would be like—Mr. Chairman, it would be like saying we need another Representative from your district, but there's only this amount of money, so you reduce your budget so that the other guy can have a job in Washington. It doesn't work that way. It doesn't work that way in Congress. It doesn't work that way for runaway centers.

There's some things that we ought to look at, also, I think, when we take a look a funding. That there has to be—has to be, perhaps, some formula to involve States that haven't got involved.

When we went to the allocation of giving money to States by virtue of their youth population, Florida took a sizable cut. We went from $600,000 and change to $300,000 and change. The other seven States in our region all got more money. So, they have less incentive to get involved in the runaway issues in their State because they picked up more Federal funds. That caused Florida to replace the lost Federal money. As a result, Florida, as June Bucy said, is one of the States that has in a line-item budget in HRS some funding formulas for runaway centers. It mandated that we passed a State law for runaway and children's act, that we do a study in each region in the State, and that the State is trying to fund a formula that they had setup to provide runaway centers.

Perhaps, as we fund Runaway Programs in any State, we ought to involve those States in coming up with hard cash matches to be involved. We do it for other things. They don't get money for juvenile justice unless they have gone to deinstitutionalization. If they don't participate, they don't get. The same for AFDC. If they don't participate as a State, they don't get the Federal moneys

I think that is a way to perhaps broaden the funding base for runaway centers. And I think it is certain, perhaps, we could take a look at.

What we also need to take a look at is gathering these statistics that we keep talking about, the hard numbers. And there have been some funny things happen since 1979, 1980.

In the original reporting form of the Federal Government, when you get your runaway youth money, it was called an ISS form. I don't know what ISS stands for. But it was the mandatory reporting system. It was the predecessor of the present I Care form. You had to fill it out in order to get your money.

You heard Dodie Livingston say that it is now voluntary. Two things happen with that. As it becomes voluntary, some people then don't do it. When you don't do it, you don't have statistics. If you don't have statistics, you don't have a problem. So, therefore, you don't need to fund.

And you'll take a look at a few years ago. We were talking about 6 million for runaways. Be cutting down from 21 because the statistics weren't there.

There's another very special item that has come to haunt us, especially in day-cares, over the last couple of years, and that is the amount of family sexual abuse, or sexual abuse nonfamily, the amount of sexual abuse of children in this country.

The original ISS form had a line for threatened or for sexual abuse. We began to get such numbers out of those in the late seventies and the early eighties that no one wanted to deal with that subject. So, when we revised the I Care form, we dropped it. For you to now report sexual abuse, you must check other and write it in. We are burying our heads in our sand—in the sand. And I'm not sure whether it's OMB or GOA or whatever it is that has the overseeing of forms. But that happened because no one wanted to deal with it.

We did a group last week. We have 12 girls in the center. We have five girls who were victims of family sexual abuse. The group was on sexuality. And when we got done we had the sixth one, who finally, with the support of the other children, talked about her problem.

It is of immense proportion. The kids that we see have a very high profile of family dysfunction, of family abuse, or sexual abuse, of neglect. These are the profiles of the kids we see. That's why they have to run. Running is nothing. Running is a cry for help.

We also don't need to go to secure detention. And Florida wrestled with this problem in the last year with a lot of testimony before the Florida Legislature that the Florida Sheriff's Association came out and said that the only reason that some of them were asking for it—because they didn't have any other alternative. If they had an alternative in their community, they wouldn't be locking up kids.

Recently, the judge in West Palm Beach wrote a letter to Governor Graham urging secure detention. West Palm Beach has no runaway center. He wrote that without ever visiting a runaway center. Over the last couple of months, he has visited a center in Saint Pete, he has visited one in Daytona Beach, I believe, or Merritt Island.

Recently, the State legislature gave to West Palm Beach a $130,000 to start a runaway center. All of a sudden the judge is not interested in secure detention because he has a viable alternative.

And if we had the viable alternative, we would not have to go to secure detention. And that isn't—why should you be locked up for running away from a house where your father is an alcoholic, or your mother is an alcoholic, or you're being abused, or your father is trying to get in bed with you. It doesn't make sense to me.

And when we detain children, we will detain children with people who do commit crimes. And I'm not so sure the kid who is already a victim needs to be traumatized any longer by a lock-up. I am against that, and I think that I can speak for the Florida Network and the Southeast Network that those are concepts that we should avoid.

When we talk about the chronic runaway, we talk about the kind of kid we need to lock up because he's always running away. If you begin to take a look at who the chronic runaways are and who the splits are from Runaway Programs, you will find out that they are, by and large, system kids. They are kids who are already in the juvenile justice system, who are already in the juvenile welfare system, who is not responsive or able to meet their needs.

And when we begin to take a look at their personality profiles, you'll find that they have a high degree of emotional disturbance, and they are really in need of mental health facilities, not detention facilities.

We have enough laws. And if somebody commits a crime, we can lock them up. We don't have enough support for the kinds of children we're seeing who are multi-problem, who have a severe emotional disturbance.

In our community, to go to the best psychiatric facility in Dade County, Grant Center, you'd better be prepared to pay $10,000 to $15,000 a month. The State can't provide that for their children, and darn few parents can provide that for their own children also, not unless you have one great income and one great health insurance plan.

Those are the kinds of kids we're talking about when we say we need secure detention.

The Florida Sheriffs' Association in their testimony said what they were concerned about and why they wanted to be able to hold kids was when a parent comes from Michigan to Florida to pick up their child, and their child leaves the nonsecure detention runaway center or nonsecure detention place, the parent gets here and the child is gone. And that's why they wanted it. But they wanted it because they had no runaway center in their community, they had no other alternatives.

In our center, as I said, 20 percent is our split rate. In the State of Florida, it's only 15.

So, those are some things that I think perhaps we ought to spend some time talking about and looking at solutions as begin to plan next year, as we begin to take a look at what some of the unmet needs are.

I have one more from my program, and I share it with Dr. Shorten, and that is the staff training. We are unable. We can get good people. We are unable to keep them. We are also unable to provide

improved training, especially in the area of suicide, and of sexual abuse, and those kinds of things, even though we have a community that has four universities in it, because of the cost of sending people to it and the cost of the program when you send people for a week or 4 days.

So, there, perhaps we ought to be looking at improving some salaries and also be putting in some kinds of money that will allow for the increased training of our staffs, particularly vulnerable child care staff, the people who are on the day-to-day child care job in our facility. They get the lowest pay, they have the hardest job. They have to be mother, father, doctor, chauffeur, and everything else to 20 teenage children. And they get the lowest pay, and they have the lowest skills.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Dick Moran follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF MIAMI BRIDGE, CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES, ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI, MIAMI, FL, PRESENTED BY RICHARD MORAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MIAMI BRIDGE

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Richard Moran, Executive Director of the Miami Bridge, a crisis intervention and short term residential center for runaway, homeless, and other dependent youth in Miami, Florida. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). I especially want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership and strong support of programs that serve runaway and homeless youth and their families. I am confident that the testimony presented today will convince you and the members of the Subcommittee that your legislative commitment to these youth and their families through the RHYA has been, and continues to be, a wise investment of public dollars.

In my testimony today, I first want to briefly describe Miami Bridge's services. Then I will highlight three of our service components which might serve as model approaches and strategies for other RHYA programs. Finally, my testimony will identify some of the critical needs of my agency, and offer some programmatic and public policy recommendations that Congress and the Administration should consider. There is no doubt that my agency's needs are indicative of the needs of other youth service programs across the country. Likewise, I know that my policy recommendations are shared by the majority of my colleagues nationwide.

BACKGROUND ON BRIDGE

Located in metropolitan Miami, and licensed by the state of Florida as a residentiall child care facility, the Miami Bridge has served local and out-of-state youth and their families since 1975. The program is accredited by the Council on Accreditation and is an active member of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, the Southeastern Network of Youth and Juvenile Services and the Florida Network.

The Bridge provides the following services:

24-hour crisis counseling, information, and telephone referral.

Short term emergency residence for both boys and girls.

Short term individual, group and family counseling on a residential or non-residential basis.

Outreach service for runaways.

Follow-up and referral for long term residence and treatment needs.

The Miami Bridge believes that young people need to be involved in the process of making the decisions that affect their lives. Youth need to be participants in genuine dialogue with their peers and adults as they come to terms with their own creative powers of responsible decision making. The Bridge provides a safe "time-out space" for youth to freely choose the next step with the help and support of caring adults.

It is important, Mr. Chairman, that the Subcommittee keep in mind that I am referring to services for "street kids", "systems kids" (from protective services, juvenile court, and police referrals), and other at-risk or high-risk youth. Many of these youth have experienced school failure, been victims of physicial or sexual abuse,

and generally have a series of family and personal problems which are quite serious.

Our full time staff includes a project director, three professionally trained counselors, nine child care workers, a volunteer coordinator, a cook, and a secretary. Medical services are provided through our working relationships with the nearby Jackson Memorial Hospital and other clinics. We actively and successfully recruit volunteers to supervise recreational and field trip activities. Several students from local colleges and university social service departments spend a semester interning at the Bridge.

The Bridge has a shelter contract with the State of Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, and we also provide services to other youth-related agencies located in the South Florida area. During the past nine years, the Bridge has sheltered more than 7,500 young people. In FY '84 we provided at least one night of shelter to 598 youth.

Miami Bridge enjoys a close working relationship with the Juvenile Court, Florida HRS, Dade County Children and Family Services, the Switchboard of Miami, and many other local public and private agencies. In September 1982, the Dade County Board of Public Instruction approved the Bridge as an alternative school site. We are proud that the local school board provides two full time teachers to our program.

As is the case with most other RHYA shelters across the country, the Bridge receives funds from a mix of other sources in addition to the RHYA. These include: Catholic Community Services of the Archdiocese of Miami, United Way, the City of Miami, Florida HRS, and other sources.

MODEL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

I want to discuss three of the Bridge's most successful program components: alternative education, linkages with the law enforcement system, and 24 hour/day crisis counseling services. I have selected these components not only because they are exemplary in their own right, but also because critics of runaway and homeless youth programs often target these services. Specifically, the allegations run as follows:

Assertion: "Most runaways are dropouts, truants, or have been suspended, and have neither the interest nor the ability to complete their educations."

Assertion: "Shelter programs and law enforcement agencies are almost always at odds with each other and can't work cooperatively in 'handling' these status offenders."

Assertion: "Counseling is a 'soft' (nonrigorous) service which really is little more than just listening to some youth or family ventilate their frustrations."

Mr. Chairman, the most convincing evidence that I can offer in refuting these assertions is the strong track record of Miami Bridge. I am especially pleased to describe our alternative education program because I am familiar with your commitment, both as a teacher and Congressman, to alternative and remedial education services for troubled and disadvantaged youth.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

The Bridge has been designated as an alternative school by the Dade County Board of Public Instruction and our agencies work cooperatively to make the program a success. We provide a classroom and most of the support services, while the school provides two full time teachers and a part time (two days/week) special education teacher. Our school has two classrooms and a computer laboratory. Interagency agreements between shelters and school systems can and do work!

Almost every child is entered in the school program (those youth in residence only 1 or 2 days are not). Our initial goals are very simple. The youth will learn one new skill or activity everyday and will/can succeed everyday. This basic approach is done because a significant number of these youth have disrupted educational histories with behaviors ranging from disruptive and inappropriate school behavior to aggressive and passive-aggressive behavior patterns.

Most students have poor school attendance histories—some as long as two consecutive years of non-attendance. Some students have lived on the streets, supporting themselves as best they could. Virtually all of them have endured prolonged assaults on their self-concept and have a poor perception of self.

Like most RHYA shelters, our residents are here on a transitional basis. Our program is a temporary placement, and the students are at the Bridge for an undetermined period of time ranging from a few days to two months. Due to the stresses in their homes of origin and the uncertainty of their future, the school experience becomes most important as it may be one of the few constants in their lives. Most

significantly, it provides these youth who have had failures in traditional school settings, an opportunity to have a positive educational experience and know that they can complete their educations. Most regular school programs cannot meet the challenges which the multiple problems of these youth create.

The Miami Bridge Outreach Education Program is designed to provide an appropriate educational program for these children and youth in residence. Shelter staff and public school staff work closely together. The priorities for our education program are:

1. To maintain or reinstate the student in the mainstream school program.
2. To assess the students' academic strengths and/or deficits and communicate them to the receiving school.
3. To provide successful learning experiences in a structured environment.
4. To shape and reinforce appropriate school behavior.
5. To collect and analyze data.

The Bridge's alternative education program continues to be a success as we enter our third year of working jointly with the school system. I believe our program is a model for those RHYA shelters who want to implement an alternative education component. Given the high dropout rates in most urban areas, our program could serve as a model for multi-service youth agencies as well as other runaway and homeless youth centers.

LINKAGES WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

There are 26 distinct police departments in Dade County; Miami Bridge works cooperatively with all of them. In those communities with a high concentration of runaway, homeless, and other at-risk youth, we have especially strong and positive relationships, e.g. the City of Miami PD, City of Miami Beach PD, and the Metro Dade Public Safety Department. We also work effectively with the Public Safety's Missing Persons Bureau on the problems of missing children and youth. Chief of Police Clarence Dixon of Miami PD (recently honored as one of the ten leading Black law enforcement officials in America) and Sgt. Ernest Pruitt of the Missing Persons Bureau are two of Miami Bridge's key supporters.

Last year, the police brought 152 youth directly from the streets to the Bridge to receive our services. Currently, we are producing a training videotape for the Police Academy (which trains police for all 26 jurisdictions) on our services to runaway and homeless youth and other juvenile justice system procedures. Miami Bridge's relationship with juvenile court is equally as healthy. It is important, Mr. Chairman, that as public policy shifts are contemplated that would dissolve or reverse some of the deinstitutionalization mandates of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, that Miami and scores of other communities across the nation have effective (and cost-effective) community-based services for these youth that work because law enforcement and youth agencies do work together.

24 HOUR/DAY CRISIS INTERVENTION COUNSELING

Miami and Dade County experience most of the same societal traumas and problems which other major urban areas in America do. Unfortunately, when many Americans think of Miami, they think first of the highly-publicized drug trafficking, violence and tension in Liberty City, and the growing populations of new arrivals and illegal immigrants. A more accurate portrayal would show Miami as a healthy and growing metropolitan area. The stresses which plague and sometimes destroy youth and families in other cities, however, also are present in Miami. The fact that one nonprofit agency—the Switchboard of Miami—exists for the major purpose of providing round-the-clock phone counseling and information and referral services is indicative of the scope of the problems. The Switchboard regularly refers youth and family crises to Miami Bridge.

The Bridge Switchboard partnership is proud of its effectiveness as a 24 hour hotline and counseling service for troubled youth and their families. Distressed parents whose child ran, a scared street youth who is desperately seeking safety, a youth considering suicide—these kinds of cases come in our phones and come through our doors. Again, such services at the Bridge are typical of the services at RHYA centers across the country. In many communities, runaway and homeless youth services programs are the only 24 hour hotline services available. Family stress and problems are not confined to the pattern of a 9–5 work day.

Miami Bridge offers a comprehensive mix of services to meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. My testimony to this point focused on those program strengths that I believed would be most germane to this oversight hearing. I want to now call your attention to some of the critical needs of the

Bridge, and then conclude my testimony with some policy concerns and recommendations.

PROGRAM AND SERVICE NEEDS

As one of the 210 agencies that completed a survey for the report submitted at this hearing by June Bucy of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, let me begin by stating that I agree with the findings of the National Network's report. Some of the program and service needs identified in that report are especially relevant for Miami Bridge, specifically:

There is a need for better service alternatives and options for the more troubled and/or hard-to-place older runaway and homeless youth, and for "systems kids": Two major needs are for more independent living programs and more accessible mental health services for those youth who are seriously emotionally disturbed or have multiple serious problems. "More" independent living programs is not a politically naive request for some new federal program or expensive legislation. Rather, it is the recommendation that independent living program models, developed under the OHDS discretionary grants program, become a regulatorily acceptable treatment mode with RHYA funds without interfering with the current crisis intervention emphasis which the act is designed to support. 16 and 17 year olds who have no possibility of returning to their families (or families to return to) are difficult to place in foster care and almost impossible to find adoptive parents for. Independent living programs will not only foster the self-sufficiency of the youths, but such programs also are cheaper than other residential options and offer greater promise of keeping the youth from eventually becoming dependent on public assistance. For that small percentage of runaway youth who have been labelled as "Chronic"—a term I find both simplistic and unfortunate—the answer is more specialized mental health services, not secure detention. The plain fact is that comprehensive mental health services are accessible only to those families with above average incomes or broad health insurance coverage. The cost for a youth in the most effective mental health facility in Miami ranges between $10,000-$15,000 per month. The majority of families who come to Miami Bridge have no real way of accessing these services unless their insurance coverage is exceptionally comprehensive. In the case of "systems kids" who have bounced around from foster home to foster home or juvenile court or protective services, they have little resources for such services.

Better prevention and early intervention services are needed. By the time many youth arrive at the shelter, they have years of victimization and family dysfunction in their case histories. Public education programs in elementary schools, with civic and religious groups, and through the media would result in the saving of substantial long term costs to the taxpayers. Available follow-up services for those youth and families who come forth from the public awareness activities are also needed. In some cases, by the time the young person runs or the parents force him out of the home, it is too late to reunify the family.

More stabilized funding, rather than year-to-year uncertainty: The lack of funding stability creates a yearly crisis for the operation of shelter programs. This involves both RHYA and other funding sources. While the yearly competitive grants process for RHYA funds may make intellectual and political good sense, it does contribute to a serious lack of long term financial stability. The problem exists with state and local funds, United Way, and other sources. This is not to say that programs should have their funding absolutely guaranteed, but there must be a way that programs that satisfy performance standards and have adequate quality controls and measurements could have more than a 12 month sense of security.

Increased funds for staff salaries: Shelter staff are underpaid and overworked. If we want to attract and keep quality child care and youth workers, their salaries have to be increased to be at least commensurate with public sector social workers. Staff at the shelters, in effect, are asked to be the temporary parents for these difficult-to-serve youth. These jobs often are not widely esteemed in the community. If we as a nation are serious about preventing the next generation of the underclass and adult homeless, adequate salaries and benefits must be available for those committed individuals who are willing to accept such difficult career challenges.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are for Congress and the administration to improve the RHYA program.

1. RHYA grantees need at least a 10 percent increase in their FY'86 appropriations: In order to meet the spiralling costs of agency liability insurance, staff benefits such as medical insurance, equipment/facility repair and maintenance, and pro-

vide an adequate cost-of-living increase for staff, a reasonable increase in the RHYA appropriation is absolutely essential. Unfortunately, the trend has been the other way, that is many programs have taken cuts in their RHYA basic grant allocation. While these funds have resulted in new programs being started up where they are needed, we are in effect "robbing Peter to pay Paul." I support expansion of the RHYA program, but only if sufficient new funds are made available. An increase in the RHYA grants will enable programs to leverage other state, local and private funds.

2. Runaway and homeless youth staff, volunteers, and board of directors need specialized training for working with troubled youth and their families: Again, this is a question of funds. Staff are working with more complicated youth problems; volunteers need training if they are to be really effective in helping; boards are facing programmatic option questions and other management decisions. A modest amount of training funds could greatly improve the programs' effectiveness. Much useful information has been generated by the ODS discretionary grants programs, but the dissemination and replication of these efforts could be stronger and amplify the original OHDS investment through a well thought out training program.

3. The ACYF management information system (ICARE) should include a reporting category for sexually abused youth: Miami Bridge is seeing an increasing number of sexually abused and exploited children and youth. Given the increase in overall child abuse reporting and the wave of scandals in day care centers and the increasing federal attention to victimization of children, ICARE should include such a category.

4. My final policy recommendation is that both Congress and ACYF review the formula for the state distribution of RHYA funds: I agree with many of my colleagues in Florida that our state is in effect underfunded, because while the allocation is based on the number of youth (not just runaways) under 18 years of age, that Florida sees a greater number of out-of-state runaway and homeless youth than most states do. I am not suggesting that any state's allocation be reduced. I am suggesting that a method for factoring in the out-of-state youth into a state's allocation be explored.

I want to thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee on Human Resources. Miami Bridge and my colleagues across the nation will be pleased to be of assistance to you and the Subcommittee at any time.

Miami Bridge annual statistical report, fiscal year 1984

Cases at beginning of year	20
Cases at end of year	18
New cases	596
Closed cases	598
Number of days cared for	7,622
Days available	8,785
Percentage of occupancy	87
Sources of referral:	
Walk-in (self-referral)	65
State HRS	282
Other social service agency	43
Police departments	152
Parents/relatives	26
School	6
National switchboard	2
Church	0
Immigration	1
Friends	21
Total	598
Reason (given at intake):	
Family problems	296
Child abuse	56
Transportation problems	9
Independent living problem	24
Adventure (kicks)	27
Legal problems	33
Abandoned	2
Family unable to care for	42

Foster home problems	42
Shelter home problems	35
Emotional problems	11
Family unwilling to care for	13
School problems	5
Illegal alien	3
Total	598

Educational level:	
8th grade or less	333
9th to 10th grade	205
11th to 12th grade	51
High school graduate	1
Unknown	8
Total	598

Sex:	
Male	254
Female	344
Total	598

Age:	
11 years or under	35
12 to 13	87
14 to 15	221
16 to 17	225
Total	598

Religion:	
Catholic	201
Non-Catholic	397
Total	598

Ethnic background:	
White	292
Black	210
Latin	94
Oriental	1
Other	1
Total	598

Home of record:	
Dade County	419
State of Florida	42
Out of State	126
Foreign nationality	11
Total	598

Previous runaways:	
None	272
1 to 2	164
3 or more	162
Total	598

Length of stay:	
1 to 3 days	245
4 to 7 days	122
8 to 14 days	81

15 or more	150
Total	598
Disposition:	
Returned to family	268
Institutional care	17
Therapeutic community	13
Group home	17
Independent living	7
Friends	4
Run to House	1
Foster home	38
Split to streets	119
Shelter home	24
Relatives	36
Hospital	14
Other	40
Total	598
Runaways:	
Male	102
Female	177
Total	279
Home/positive placements:	
Male	83
Female	119
Total	202
Split:	
Male	19
Female	58
Total	77

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Moran.

Why do you think—it's hard to assign motivation. But what reasons would people like Mr. Regnery and others have, who keep calling for the restoration of secure facilities or lockups. Why do you think they think they are needed?

Mr. MORAN. If you were present——

Mr. KILDEE. And this is a constant——

Ms. YOUNG. We're going to fight over the mike on this one.

Mr. KILDEE. It's a constant recurring theme. You know, I fought the battle about 3 or 4 years ago on the valid court order secure facilities. But this keeps coming back and back as if this is the solution, that we have to have that option of a lockup place.

Ms. YOUNG. I may be out on a limb. I think people who suggest that as a solution for young people who are running away from home and repeatedly telling us in the most dramatic fashion that they have at their disposal to tell us that they are involved in abusive, nonproductive, destructive situations that to—for someone to suggest that these are people who need to be locked up for their own protection are people who probably don't want to think about kids with problems. They don't want to see it. They don't want to deal with it. They would rather not be bothered.

Every—and I'm—every study that has ever—reputable study that's ever been done about the impact of locking up kids on their future life will show you that when that happens that dramatically

increases that young person's likelihood to remain in the criminal justice system at other points later on in their life rather than having a salutory effect on young people.

What we are doing is teaching them to be involved in the juvenile—the criminal justice system. We are increasing the likelihood that they will continue to be. And we are decreasing all of those things that make them able to deal effectively with what we consider the constructive, ongoing life of communities. We decrease their self-esteem. We stigmatize them. We tell their friends, their family, the whole community that they are bad. And these are self-fulfilling prophecies. And that flies in the face of what we say we are trying to do with these kids.

Mr. KILDEE. Some may feel that a padlock is cheaper than a program, you know.

Ms. YOUNG. Well, it is. Of course, it is.

Mr. KILDEE. They feel that's a fiscal thing. But when they look at the kids——

Ms. YOUNG. A padlock may be cheaper than a program. But you don't just buy a padlock when you lock a person up.

Mr. KILDEE. Well, you and I recognize that. But I think some of them have that short-term attitude. I, frankly, get personally infuriated when they cavalierly propose a freeze for a program that's so important when we're discovering the need is greater than what we thought originally.

But it must go back to that idea that when the same people who are supporting freezes are also proposing lockups that they may equate the short-term fiscal savings rather than looking at the long-term needs of that child and the program.

Dick?

Mr. MORAN. Actually, it isn't. It isn't cheaper to lock them up.

Mr. KILDEE. No. I know it isn't in the long run. But, in the short term, they may feel it is.

Mr. MORAN. We could send our children to the best schools in the United States for college and it would cost less than it would to keep them at Raiford, our State prison, or in Marianna, one of our State schools.

The other question is, if you lock them up, how long are you going to keep them locked up, and what are you going to do with them, and what's he going to be like when he gets out? What are you going to do? Are you going to keep him locked up forever? That's, I think, got to be a capital offense. And runaway is not a capital offense. And being abused certainly isn't a capital offense.

So, that that's only like this far. What do you do after?

Mr. KILDEE. Well, what we need——

Mr. MORAN. And no one bothers to—no one's bothered to take a look at that.

Mr. KILDEE. What we need, is when people in high places here in Washington, when people who are in charge of certain programs, are calling for lockups, rather than programs, we need, from people like yourself an immediate, informed—as you're doing here—response to that.

I've had to fight the battle very often on the floor. We lost the valid court order battle 5 years ago on the floor. We need people like yourself, as you're doing this morning very well, to reply.

Statements of Mr. Regnery should not go unchallenged. And people like yourself can do that far better than I because you're, experts in this.

I try to become more expert by getting input from people like yourself. But I really think that your associations, your professional associations, your agencies, should really pounce on those statements and not let them go unchallenged I think that they're making progress from their point of view. I really think they are. So, they have to be challenged.

Ms. YOUNG. Part of the dynamic that I think is happening when those kinds of statements are made is that running away is a visible, identifiable act. And because of that, we sometimes assume that that is the act that we are dealing with, that that is the primary symptom. It's the one that is accessible. It's the one we see. It's the one we know about. And, therefore, it's the one we have to deal with.

That's a very simplistic view of dealing with problems in our society. When, in fact, running away is not a primary symptom. Running away is a secondary symptom.

And what we know about closely watching families operate and the way family systems work is that a kid who runs away is not showing us for the first time that something is wrong. What we're doing is closely our eyes until that very apparent symptom knocks us over the head. There are clues and symptoms long before that kid has reached the end of their rope and decides to run away.

And what we need to be doing is providing some very, very low cost, cost effective prevention and early intervention programs with families and in our communities so that we are not faced with only being able to deal with this problem once that very expensive process of housing a kid away from home becomes their only alternative.

Mr. KILDEE. Dick, and the others may respond to this, too. You mentioned that you refer these young people who come in, to other agencies. Do you also refer the families to agencies when the family is suffering. How do you work with a family?

Mr. MORAN. There are a number of things. Some of these, the social service agencies, refer runaway children and children and their families to us if the child needs a cooling off period or the child has run from home.

Suppose the child walks and we cannot make some resolvement in a week or ten days, and we feel that the kinds of services that are needed would be—would need the intervention of the Juvenile Justice System, the Juvenile Court, and Health and Rehabilitative Services. We will make that referral.

And if have space available with the contract we have with them, they then become sheltered. They become a primary responsibility of the State case worker. And they stay in our shelter. We don't dribble kids around in our community.

So that they may refer a child to us who has been abused, and they are going to have a court case, and we would house that child. We can refer the other way. As we find out that a child cannot, say, be returned home and we can't find relatives, then we will make the referral, along with the help of the State worker, to an appropriate facility. whether it's a Baptist children's home, or

Catholic children's home, or Sheriff's Boy's Ranch, or to a foster home, or to whatever. We do that simply because we have that working relationship.

We do talk to each other. We attend the shelter review meetings with the Juvenile Justice System every Thursday morning, and we talk about the kids we have in care that are not theirs and the kids that are theirs, and that we talk about making plans for these children.

When we do send the family home, if we're able to get a child and a family to go back home and begin to make some arrangement about concessions to each other and about working with each others, we would not send that family home and make that reunification without trying to get them some support as they get back home.

We use Switchboard of Miami's Counseling Center, United Children and Family Services, Jewish Family Services, Catholic Community Services, or, if they can afford it, you know, private family counseling. But you never leave anybody hang.

Now, sometimes people may not follow up with their appointments or with the family counseling, but that service is already there.

Much the same, as I said, the emergency room. All we can do is get the Band-Aids and the assessment. And then they have got to go to where the help is. And that's exactly what happens.

So, there's referrals both ways. And it's just a matter of a working relationship, and then it's done.

I realize, in some areas, that there is a feeling that runaway centers work in a vacuum and that police and runaway centers don't talk to each other and that they are at opposite ends of a pole. And that's not true.

Actually, law enforcement and social service are the very same professions. They both work with people who are in crisis. It may or may not be a violation of law. And the law enforcement is first concerned with the law violation and then the social problem. And the social worker is concerned with the social problem, but can't ignore the law violation either.

So, until you get down to the third or fourth part of their jobs, they're the exact same people in the exact same business. And I think we've been able to created that in our community between police and HRS and private social service agencies.

Mr. KILDEE. Anyone else want to respond to that?

Mr. SHORTEN. No. But let me go one step further.

Mr. KILDEE. OK.

Mr. SHORTEN. The beauty of what's happening is that I live in Florida, she's in Central America, and he's in Southern America, and I'm beaming at Florida and Iowa, and we're saying the same things. And we're saying that, regardless of the part of the country, kids are running for the same reason. It doesn't matter if they are white, black, Hispanic. It doesn't matter if they are rich, middle income, or poor.

And I was asking myself a question. Two 15-year-old girls, living at home, with a mother and the mother's boyfriend or their stepfather. The girl is being assaulted by the, you know, stepfather or boyfriend. One girl says I love my mother and I must respect the

man in her life, so I will stay here. The other child says this is not good for my mental health, this is not good for my physical health. And that child runs.

We think of running away as being a negative act. But, in many instances, running away is a sign of positive mental health.

And, so, what we are trying to do is take kids who themselves have decided this is not right, I want something better. And we're trying to help them find something better.

I was just looking at my budget. We served 300 kids in shelter and 1,500 kids in community outreach. My budget is $263,000. If you divide that by 1,800, I serve 1,800 people for $146. I mean, that's the best bargain in the world. You can't even—you know, we bought some clothes for Mike to make the trip, and we spent more than that, you know, for one trip.

I'm rambling, ladies and gentlemen. But the point is, emergency shelters from my perspective, and I've been in social work for 15 years, they are the best bargain in the social work community from my perspective. I really feel that way.

And I know that all of you are listening to us. I know you are taking notes on what we are saying. And our responses are consistent, regardless of where we live.

And I know if we had shelters here from California, or New York, or New Mexico they would all be saying the same thing.

Ms. YOUNG. I would like to make one comment if I could, please. And that is that I think Ted makes an excellent point when he talks about—you asked about the family. Kids don't exist in a vacuum anymore than runaway shelters exist in a vacuum. Kids are part of a family, and that family may or may not look like our own personal description of what a family may be, but they exist as a part of a family. And it is very, very unusual to find a young person who is running away from—whatever situation they're running away from, that whole family is experiencing that situation. And running is the manner in which that child has chosen to deal with it. It does not mean that anybody else is dealing with it any better.

And, so, when we talk about doing family problem solving, and family resolution, and crisis intervention, we're talking about a whole family system that needs help because they need help, but also because that child is part of a system. And you're not going to take that child out and fix it and then put it back in and expect anything to work over the long haul. That whole family system has to be brought to bear in the resolution of the problem.

Mr. MORAN. One other comments. I'd like to, perhaps, broaden that family thing to one step further, that the community is the family, too.

You'll find that—and it's already been spoken to. You'll find in most runaway centers that the Federal budget, the Federal moneys, are only a small portion of their budget. In my particular program, my grant is $90,993. I don't know how we got to that figure, but that's the one we got—$90,993. That is 18 percent of my budget. The State in the runaway supplement comes up with $85,500. It almost matches the Federal Government.

United Way increased 50 percent from $30,000 to $45,000. The city revenue sharing—revenue sharing will be going out, I guess,

this year or next year. Isn't that one of the things that goes by the wayside? That's worth $8,000? That's strictly a food line item.

So, that—and we get some private donations. And, at present, we're receiving some money from the Archdiocese and the shelter contract with the State. So that there is a broad support, and it's of various social service agencies, and private agencies, and of local governments.

And runaway centers, I think, have been very adept, around the country, for doing that, and of making the community a family around this issue, too. And I think that's something that the Federal moneys have allowed us to do. And maybe if we got a little bit more Federal money that that might help.

I think, when you also have to take a look at, perhaps, having some increase for existing programs and their funding, and I think if you fund new programs you've got to come up with a new pot of money.

But the idea that there is community support for these kinds of programs, and they've demonstrated it very well——

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Tauke.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have to leave shortly, so I will make this brief.

But as I have been sitting here listening I think that one of the major problems that you face is the image that people have of the runaway and the parents of the runaway child. I think that most Americans, certainly Iowans, if you talk about runaway youth, you think of the poor parents who are sitting there at home, anguished, wondering where their child might be.

Consequently, the running away, as you alluded to, Doctor, is seen as a very negative thing, where the child is bringing great pain to the parents. And until you deal, I think, with that general public perception of what the runaway problem is, I think it's going to be difficult to gain the kind of support that may be necessary in order to deal effectively with the problem or to deal effectively with this battle that you've been fighting relating to the lockups and so on.

Maybe it would be worthwhile to just spend a few moments dwelling on, not the runaway, but the rest of the family. Where are the parents in these cases? Are the parents living at home, anguishing, wondering where the children are?

Mr. MORAN. For some. The idea that every mother and father is at home just dying, wondering where their kids are is not necessarily true. We call parents every—you know, when we get a new child, and say that, you know, this is Miami Bridge, and Dick Moran, and your daughter Sally is here. And, all of a sudden, you get, we never want to see that blankety, blankety, blank, blank, no good, boomp, boomp, and whatever, and they hang up.

So, not every parent——

Mr. TAUKE. Is that customary?

Mr. MORAN. It happens at least a couple of times a month, sure. When you throw a child away, when you throw him out of your house, you don't put them on the computer as a runaway. Why would you put somebody on a computer to get back that you don't want to begin with?

We tend to, some times, in lots of families, to look at kids like this pen. When I don't want it any more or it's no longer useful or it runs out of ink, I dispose of it. We dispose of beer cans. We dispose of children. We dispose of pens almost equally at ease, and it's unfortunate.

Not all parents are sitting home waiting for their children.

Mr. TAUKE. This is a very naive question. Suppose you have a person come to your shelter, and you call up the parents and they say, oh, yes, I'm dying to get Susie home. But Susie has been a victim of sexual abuse. How do you proceed?

Mr. MORAN. Well, under our State law, you must report sexual abuse. If your child is from Iowa and ended up in Miami and said that she ran away because of sexual abuse, we would still make all the efforts we could to get the child back to Iowa, back to relatives, to report it to the proper authorities in Iowa, and get her back to the best helping situation we could find for her.

Mr. TAUKE. That presumes that Susie is anxious to go back.

Mr. MORAN. Well, she may not necessarily be anxious to go home. But when you sit down with children——

Mr. TAUKE. No. But I mean it's assuming that she's also willing to go and talk to people about the fact that she's been abused.

Mr. MORAN. That's part of what you get when you go through counseling.

But, Susie, if you're away from home, what do you want to happen? What do you expect to happen from here? What responsibility are you going to take for your life? What are your alternatives?

And as you begin to sort those through with somebody in a very calm and logical manner, children aren't dumb. They didn't—she probably didn't—as Twila said—didn't want to be away from home in the first place. She just didn't like what was happening there. She wants things to change.

It's rare where you find a situation where it's all the parents' fault or all the kid's fault. It's sort of like in a divorce. There's some ownership by both parties. Some times it's more on one half than another. But in a family it's not—it is a family. There is ownership of the problem on both parts.

So, you try to get this child back to the best living situation you can get and the best help. Ideally, it would be back to family or relatives. You would perhaps need to involve the authorities in the State of Iowa. You would need, certainly, to get some counseling for this family and for this child for the experience she's had.

Mr. TAUKE. Suppose Susie hasn't been sexually abused, but she arrives at your shelter, and you call up the parents in Wisconsin—of course they've got to answer where I am—but they call up the parents in Wisconsin, and the parents said we'll be right down, we want to get Susie back. And Susie says I don't want to go back.

Mr. MORAN. OK. Then you have to spend some time. Actually, we would ask the parents not to come. There are simpler ways to do it that are less expensive, at least for Miami. We're fortunate that we have a lot of non-stop air, and we're able to get children home fairly quickly.

What we would do in cases like that—well, you know, there are some options that you don't have in Florida that you do have in

Wisconsin. And if you refuse to go home, are there relatives in Wisconsin? Perhaps the Briarpatch in—what is it?—Milwaukee or another runaway program or another shelter who would be—would you be willing to at least go there and then work with your family and work with what's available in Wisconsin?

Mr. TAUKE. How many of the people who come to your shelters are basically there because they want to make contact with their families and they want to go home?

Mr. MORAN. Of the children that we see, most come because they—most children really want to go back home. They want something to change in their families. They are unable to handle what's happening there. They don't necessarily—even when the ones that come in and say I don't care if I never see my mother again, that so-and-so doesn't care about me, when you begin to spend some time to go through it you find out that that is generally not true on either party's part.

Mr. TAUKE. They want to go home eventually.

Mr. MORAN. They want some things to change.

Mr. TAUKE. Yes. But I'm talking about how many come in and basically your responsibility is to call the parents and make arrangements for transportation back. What percentage?

Mr. MORAN. You mean just simply transportation back?

Mr. TAUKE. Well——

Mr. MORAN. You, generally, when——

Mr. TAUKE. Or the kid wants to go home and the parents want him.

Mr. MORAN. That's fine. And you make that arrangement as soon as possible. And you try and give the family and the child some resource in their own hometown, no matter where it is, either through the National Runaway Directory or——

Mr. TAUKE. Is that 10 percent? Is that 59 percent?

Mr. MORAN. Oh, I couldn't give you a number on that. I think most——

Mr. TAUKE. Eighty percent?

Mr. SHORTEN. I've never heard of it.

Mr. MORAN. Most children want to go home. It happens. But the kids who ran away for adventure—we get a spring break syndrome, where the family's wonderful, and it's spring break, and you are in high school, and you want to be in college, so you lie about it, and you come—those kids want to go home and those parents want them back. That's really simple. That is not an extensive family problem. It was a growing-up problem perhaps, but it's not an extensive family problem. Those are minor. We listed 24 children out of 598 who ran away for kicks and adventure and have no major problem.

I don't know what percentage that is right off the top. That's about 5 percent.

Mr. TAUKE. Five percent.

Mr. MORAN. That's not very many. Most of the children we see have very severe problems.

Mr. SHORTEN. Mr. Chairman and the committee, what I'm saying is that we at Family Connection have made a commitment to serve the multilayered, multiproblem child. Fortunately, we have more than one shelter in Houston. And the children know the differ-

ences among and between the shelters as well as or better than the adults.

You know, we heard Mike say that he was at a shelter and he wanted to go out and get a job and they wouldn't let him. So, he asked, well, will you let me go to Family Connection, because he knew that if he came to Family Connection we would allow him to stay with us, have our services, and still go to school and still go out and work.

So, in my, you know, particular shelter, I've never had a child to come in and say I want to go home, and then we call the parents and they say I want you. It would be nice if it happened that way. I mean, we have kids who say I would love to go home if things in the house were changed. And this is what they've been saying. And I've heard parents say, we will let the child come home, assuming that there's some change. But we've never had both parties say, hey, let's get together again because I just left for kicks. I mean, we have not experienced that. I just don't know of any cases like that.

Ms. YOUNG. I would like to also point out that the discussion that we're having right now is a very important discussion, because what it highlights is that these are not simple situations. It is not a simple situation. It is a very complex situation. And when we get into trouble when we try to deal with it is when we treat it like a simple situation.

These kids want to do this. This family wants to do this. This is how we deal with these. And this is what we're going to do with this. And this is how much it's all going to cost, and then we'll go home. It just doesn't work that way. It's all very complex family dynamics that are going on here that are exacerbated by time and distance. And the importance of being in the right place at the right time I can't emphasize enough. Because a family which is in crisis is a family that's ready to change, and grow, and do something.

As that crisis subsides and the situation becomes the status quo, in other words, as the kid gets farther away from home, and then days and then weeks begin to elapse, that status quo sets in, and the moment for change and growth in that family is lost. And that's why it is so important to identify those kids at the moment of family crisis, at the moment that the kid who says, I'm not going to take this any more, says that and walks out and everybody in the family goes, oh, what happened, everybody else thinks this is OK, why is there any problem. That's when you can say this is the problem, let's do something about it.

A week later, well, you know, it's just not that big a deal any more. That's why it's so important to have crisis intervention, early intervention, onsite, family work, right then, or you're going to end up with a situation that doesn't change. And then that's something that kids are not going to go back to.

Mr. TAUKE. Just one other question that isn't related to that. But let me just suggest or reemphasize the point that I think there is a lot of misperception about the nature of the runaway problem. And I think many people, most people, look at it through the eyes of the parents and think that it is the ungrateful kid that's leaving home. And that's one of the reasons why I think you have difficulty achieving some of the goals that you have.

I know, in Ames, that your program has also received the discretionary grant relating to the missing children's issue. Is there any coordination among your programs?

Ms. YOUNG. Yes. What we've established is the Iowa Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Youth Prevention and Education Center. And that's a prevention and education center which, as you have said, is funded under a discretionary grant.

There is a lot of coordination and a lot of similarity. And the reason that we see these problems sharing so many things is because of our emphasis on the family itself, on the kinds of dynamics that happen within a family.

There are a lot of kinds of prevention, and education, and developmental things that we need to be doing with young people and with families that have a ripple effect. They affect many, many different parts of our lives. The kinds of activities and information that help children build self-esteem, that help them find alternatives in their environment, that help them feel powerful, that help them know that they can have some control over their lives and that they can effect change in their lives. These kinds of messages are very important for young people. They are important for young people who are coming up against problems in their adolescence to help them, to give them the tools to work through those problems. And with those tools a lot of kids who run away from home would have other alternatives.

But it's also true of a 6- or a 7-year-old who gets lost and needs to know what the choices are, where to find help, what they have power over and what they don't have power over, what's safe and what's not safe. These are things that kids who live in our society need to know. And they need to know that without being frightened of everybody who is a stranger to them.

And, so, I think that there are a lot of basic kinds of educational developmental things that we can do with young people and with families that help protect those kids and those families and help them grow and be healthy. And that's why we think that they are very, very connected.

Mr. TAUKE. Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Tauke.

You know, people like yourself, the three of you and the others who have testified, have made it possible that we have made any progress at all in these programs, to even get the programs established in the first place.

Really. It didn't come from within the Congress so much. It came from people like yourself out there who pressed us and pressed administrations to do things like this.

And I'm going to challenge you, maybe incite you, to just really be angry when we aren't doing enough. And we aren't.

You know, Cap Weinberger has just about doubled the size of the Defense budget. This is my pet kick right here. He's about doubled it. But he didn't get any of that money from increased taxes. He got that money from you and the kids you serve. He did. And there was no increased tax. The taxes have been cut, right?

So, when those Defense dollars grew, he got it by freezing your programs, by proposing to cut revenue sharing, which will also

hurt your programs. Every one of those Defense dollars, the increase in Defense, came not because people had the courage to say we need more revenue, but by saying we're going to take it from other people. And they took it from the programs that you need and are so penuriously funded right now.

You should really be angry. Even Christ himself got angry and put knots in the ropes and drove the thieves out of the Temple, right? Anger can be a virtue, too. So, be angry, because people are taking money from your programs.

If they need money for their program, then let them have the courage not to steal from the programs you have for children, but go and say we need more revenue. But don't take it from these programs. Don't take it from revenue sharing. That's what's happening.

I tell you that only because you should never come down here and feel a little reticent about asking for your dollars. Ask for it with enthusiasm and with just anger. Asking to serve those people who really need service so badly.

You know, young people, just by their youth alone, can be very vulnerable. And for those that don't have a secure home, they're even more vulnerable.

And, Mike, again, I appreciate your testimony. You've given us an insight that's just very, very valuable. I really appreciate your coming here and doing that for us.

And, so, for you who have testified today, I commend you for what you have done. I challenge and incite you to really demand those dollars you need to take care of the young people of this country.

Dick?

Mr. MORAN. We have a national policy for defense. Perhaps we should begin to work on and have a national policy for youth.

Mr. KILDEE. I certainly would concur.

Mr. MORAN. And that is something I think that the network is trying to talk about. And maybe with a national policy for youth we'd begin to pay a little bit more attention to it.

Mr. KILDEE. Well, now, you're very important to us in this process. We will not make any progress at all without you people. I can be involved, but I never will have the intimacy of involvement that you people have. You play a very important role.

And I want to stay in close contact with you personally, with Susan, here, of my staff, the rest of my staff, Jeff, over here, to keep us informed. Because, you know, in this you have to have not only a good heart, but a good head. You have to know what's the right thing and how to proceed correctly. Right? You need both, a good head and a good heart.

So, help us, inform our—motivate our wills and enlighten our intellects.

The record will stay open for 10 days for further testimony.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

[Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

TO WHOM DO THEY BELONG?

"A Profile of America's Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them"

THE NATIONAL NETWORK
OF RUNAWAY AND YOUTH SERVICES, INC.

JULY 1985

The National Network
of Runaway and Youth Services, Inc.
905 - 6th Street, S.W.
Suite 411
Washington, D.C. 20024
202-488-0739

June Bucy, Executive Director

I. INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since Congress established the Runaway Youth Act in 1974, concerned citizens, organizations and policymakers across America have gradually become more aware of the serious problems involving runaway and homeless youth and their families. Current estimates of the number of runaway and homeless children and youth in America range from 1.3 to 2 million each year. A few studies and extrapolations suggest that there may be as many as 4 million children who run away from home for at least one night each year.

Who are these children and youth? What are their problems and how serious are they?. There are no clear, discrete categories, but the following definitions are generally accepted. It is important to remember that children frequently fall into more than one category.

"runaways" are children and youth who are away from home at least overnight without parental or caretaker permission.

"homeless" are youth who have no parental, substitute foster or institutional home. Often, these youth have left, or been urged to leave with the full knowledge or approval of legal guardians and have no alternative home.

"systems kids" are youth who have been taken into the custody of the state due to confirmed child abuse and neglect, or other serious family problems. Often these children have been in a series of foster homes, have had few opportunities to develop lasting ties with any adult, are school drop-outs, and have few independent living skills.

"street kids" are long-term runaway or homeless youth who have become adept at fending for themselves "on the street", usually by illegal activities.

"missing children" can refer to any child whose whereabouts are unknown. It is most often used to refer to children who are believed to have been abducted and victims of foul play and/or exploitation.

There is no "typical" runaway or homeless youth. They are most often youth between the ages of 12 and 18. The runaway population is comprised of male, female, White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, urban and rural youth from all socio-economic classes, from every State and Congressional District in the nation.

Many of these children, however, are "throwaways" --young people who have been forced out of their homes by their families. Others have run away because they were physically or sexually abused or victims of extreme neglect. Providers believe that a high percentage of these youth run away because their families have become "dysfunctional", that is, the family has such economic, marital, alcohol abuse or mental health problems that there has been a total breakdown between the youths and families resulting in crisis situations. Finally, some of these youths are socially and emotionally troubled. They have experienced a series of other personal failures with their schools, the law, finding a job, drug and alcohol abuse, and other adolescent situations. They see leaving as their way out.

Most youth service providers agree that, in the vast majority of cases, the young people are running away from something rather than to something. The mistaken public perception that runaway and homeless youth are on the streets because they are pursuing a carefree and rebellious lifestyle is rapidly dissolving. If policymakers, the media, and the American public learn more about the problems and tragedies these children and youth face, it is our hope that more appropriate and cost-effective services can be implemented to prevent this large group of runaway and homeless youth from apprenticing into the next generation of homeless adults.

To Whom Do They Belong? A Profile of America's Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them is the report of a needs assessment conducted by the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services based on survey data gathered from 210 youth service agencies across the nation. The purpose of this survey was to capture demographic information on the runaway and homeless youth coming to shelters and find out what programs serving these youth need. The survey's methodology and findings are discussed in Sections III and IV.

The purpose of this report is to analyze the survey's findings, draw some first-level conclusions, and raise some issues for consideration by service providers, policymakers, and concerned citizens. How many youth are coming to these shelters and what kinds of problems do they have? Do these shelters "work" -- do they help these troubled young people and, when possible, their families? What additional services are needed for these youth in order to redirect their lives towards self-sufficiency and law-abiding behavior and away from a future dependency on public assistance? Finally, what can policymakers and the general public do to help these youth and the shelters that serve them? Our report does not fully answer these questions, but it does provide valuable current information -- profiles of the youth, shelter services, and identification of

those programmatic areas in which future public and private investments on behalf of these youth and their families should be directed.

The question raised in the title, "To Whom Do They Belong?" is intended to generate further discussion on the most effective and humane approaches to helping these runaway and homeless youth. In a perfect world, the obvious answer would be to reunite all of these children with their families. Our world, however, is less than perfect. Many of these children have fled their homes because of abuse, neglect, or other serious family problems. For those youth simply to return to the same crisis situations would only lead to more problems. In fact, a 1983 survey by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services shows that about 50% of these youth have a realistic prospect of returning home or going to a foster care family. The issue facing policymakers is which service systems and programs can best resolve the problems of these youth and the attendent consequences to society which these problems exacerbate.

The National Network's response to the question "to whom do they belong" is that **these youth are best served by community-based shelters and youth programs which provide a mix of counseling and other support services in an environment where the youth feel safe.**

The National Network wishes to express its gratitude to the staff and Board of Directors of the 210 runaway and homeless youth services programs who responded to our eight page questionnaire. We are also grateful to Suzanne Tuthill, Ph.D. for assistance with the data collection and analysis. Don Mathis, the National Network's Associate Director, served as the coordinator for this project. No Federal or other public funds were used to carry out this survey or produce this report. We hope that this report contributes to greater understanding by the general public on the problems of these youth and the successes and needs of the shelter programs which help them.

Linda Reppond, Chairperson
June Bucy, Executive Director

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Inc.

II. BACKGROUND ON THE NATIONAL NETWORK, RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH SERVICES, AND THIS REPORT

The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services is a national, nonprofit membership organization comprised of more than 500 regional, state, and local youth services agencies providing services to runaway, homeless, and other troubled children and youth. One of the National Network's major goals is to promote improvements in the service systems and public policies which affect these youth, other young people, and their families. In order to achieve this goal, the National Network periodically collects information on the shelters, the services they provide, and the children, youth, and families they serve.

The National Network:

- o provides training and technical services on youth issues;
- o publishes a bi-monthly newsletter;
- o conducts an annual symposium in Washington, D.C;
- o monitors federal and state policies which affect children, youth, and families;
- o conducts public awareness/education activities.

In 1984, the National Network implemented a national computerized information-sharing telecommunications system (YOUTHNET) and also became the administering agency for the National Fund for Runaway Children. This program division grew out of a 1982 series of cover stories in Parade Magazine by Dotson Rader on the problems and tragedies of America's runaway, homeless and street youth. The Fund receives donations from groups and individuals and awards these funds to youth shelter programs that need support.

The National Network is administered by a member- elected, nationally representative Board of Directors who are distinguished by their expertise in youth services and policy. (See Appendix) The National Network's office is in Washington, D.C. June Bucy serves as Executive Director.

National attention on the problems of runaway and homeless youth is a relatively recent phenomenon. In 1970, the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency held hearings on the increasing numbers of youth who were fleeing from their homes and were in danger. In 1972, concerned youth service providers and advocates met in Minnesota and recognized the national scope of the problem, the need for specific types of services for these at-risk youth, and the need for communication between shelters across the country. In September of 1974, Congress enacted, and President Ford signed, the landmark Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Runaway Youth Act. In 1977, as

Congress developed a greater understanding of the problem of homeless youth and throwaways, the law was amended as the "Runaway and Homeless Youth Act" (RHYA).

In 1975, a national survey by the Federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (now the Department of Health and Human Services) estimated that there were 733,000 runaway and homeless youth annually. 1984 estimates, which seem most reliable to the National Network, range from 1.3 to 1.5 million runaway and homeless youth each year.

Services to Runaway and Homeless Youth. During 1984, $23.25 million in funds were appropriated by Congress for the RHYA to support 260 runaway and homeless youth shelters across the nation. A portion of these funds were used to support the National Runaway Switchboard, a toll-free hotline and communication channel which counsels youth who are thinking about running away; provides crisis counseling and referral service to runaway and homeless youth, and brokers contact between the youth and their families. Finally, a portion of the RHYA funds go to innovative direct service projects and research directed at special issues and problems, e.g. family reunification strategies, independent living programs for older homeless teens, suicide prevention, employment and training services, juvenile prostitution, and others.

Many state and local governments fund and support services to runaway and homeless youth. New York, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Texas, Florida, Oklahoma, and other states make such funds available. Most shelters are administered by community-based non-profit agencies. Furthermore, most runaway and homeless youth shelters receive support from their local United Way, religious groups, corporations, foundations, and other private sources, including donations from individuals.

Staff and volunteers at the shelters help runaway and homeless youth, and when possible their families, by being accessible and responsive. Shelters are staffed and open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hotline phone counseling is always available. The shelter provides a safe place for the young people to stay while these youth receive counseling, food, and other support services (e.g. health, education, family counseling, and more). The first goal of the shelter programs generally is to reunite the youth with his/her family by encouraging and helping the resolution of the intra-family problem(s). In those cases where successful family reunification is not possible, shelter staff work with the youth and other public and private social service agencies to secure the most appropriate long-term living arrangements for the youth.

In addition to crisis intervention services, many shelters across the nation provide other specialized services which the

youth need, including drug and alcohol counseling, long-term foster care, transportation, recreation, and work readiness training. As Section IV of this report will show, runaway and homeless youth programs effectively provide a mix of comprehensive services to these at-risk or high-risk youth, and when possible their families.

- Since the 1974 implementation of the federal runaway and homeless youth program, shelters have been improving the quality and scope of their services to these troubled young people. Community agencies, such as Boys Clubs, the Salvation Army, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, YMCA, YWCA and others have become actively involved in serving runaway and homeless children and youth.

RATIONALE FOR THIS REPORT

Many media outlets, policymakers, and concerned groups have become interested in the scope and severity of the problems of runaway and homeless youth. A great deal of public interest in the plight of these children has been generated by feature stories on runaways in Parade, Life, Reader's Digest, The New York Times, and many other magazines and newspapers. Good Morning America, CBS Sunday Morning, ABC 20/20, Nightline, the USA Network and many other television and radio programs have carried segments on runaways during the past two years.

One important consequence of this media attention on youth problems is that key policymakers, community leaders, law enforcement officials, and others request more information than is contained in the media's case studies and anecdotes on individual runaway and homeless children. A need was identified for a national overview (with statistics) on the problems of these youth and how shelters help these youth.*

In November of 1984, the National Network Board of Directors instructed its staff to carry out a national survey and needs assessment of agencies which provide services to runaway and homeless youth. An eight page questionnaire was designed by National Network Board Members, staff, shelter directors, and volunteers with expertise in youth services. The questionnaire had three major sections. The first focused on the agency and its capacity for serving youth. The second requested numbers and information on the youth served. The third asked the agency to identify its program needs, success stories, and future priorities.

More than 900 questionnaires were distributed nationally; the exact number is impossible to determine as shelter adminstrators were encouraged to duplicate and circulate the questionnaire among their colleagues who had not received it. All member agencies of the National Network and all federally-funded runaway and homeless youth shelters were mailed the survey.

In February, 1985 preliminary survey results were released during the National Network's 11th annual symposium. Sections III and IV of this report represent the final numbers and findings. 210 agencies, representing more than 312 shelters and 230 foster homes serving

*Parenthetically, readers of this report may be interested in two other documents: Runaway and Homeless Youth, National Program Inspection (October, 1983) and the FY 1983 Annual Report to the Congress on the Status and Accomplishments of the Centers Funded Under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (issued February, 1985). Both of these reports were prepared by the Office of Human Development Services/Department of Health and Human Services.

runaways, responded to the survey. Respondents were from all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

To Whom Do They Belong? A Profile of America's Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them, captures the results of this survey. The purpose of this report is to provide a current overview on the successes, needs, and types of runaway and homeless youth programs and the youth they serve. The National Network's intent is to inform policymakers, the media, and concerned groups and individuals about these cost-effective, crisis intervention services which are helping thousands of troubled young people and their families every day in every state of our nation.

III. METHODOLOGY

To Whom Do They Belong? A Profile of America's Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them (hereafter referred to as TW) is the result of a pilot survey of 210 youth service agencies across the country. The purposes of this pilot survey were to:

1) generate data and descriptive information which would provide an up-to-date profile of the youth and the shelters.

2) find out what types of information shelters were or were not recording and what these data reveal.

3) trigger the National Network and youth shelters in gathering data which have not been kept, e.g. incidences of sexual abuse, suicide attempts, family service needs, staff training needs, and more.

4) use the findings from this survey to design a more appropriate data-gathering instrument with fixed-response categories.

5) use the narrative and anecdotal information to provide additional findings, future instrument questions, and clear up any ambiguities around present and future data systems.

6) determine whether there is a need for a more scientifically rigorous study.

More importantly in terms of the methodology, this study presents a national "profile" of these youth and services. That is, the design relies on nominal and ordinal level data from which only descriptive statistics can be derived. Specifically, the survey provided frequency distributions of program services, service needs, and numbers and types of youth served. The questionnaire and this research were not designed nor intended to provide detailed statistical inferences (e.g. causal relationships) between reporting categories. The "profile" is a summary of aggregate numbers and significant program needs. Expressed program needs will be noted as "significant" if more than 50% (105 of the 210) responding agencies identified the issue or problem as a need. "Other" program needs responses will include those with less than 50% response rate, yet are identified by such respondents as critical to their respective programs. It is important to remember that these expressed program/service needs are derived directly from the problems and needs which these runaway and homeless youth have when they arrive at the shelter.

To Whom Do They Belong? A Profile of America's Runaway and Homeless Youth and the Programs That Help Them is a profile of America's runaway and homeless youth and the shelters that serve them. The numbers and responses covering a one year period between 1983-1984 offer an up-to-date picture of these youth and the shelters.

IV. FINDINGS AND COMMENTARY

Survey Population & Numerical Results

By April 1985, the National Network had received surveys from 210 agencies which serve runaway and homeless youth. These agencies represent 312 separate shelter facilities and 230 individual foster care homes (for short and long term services to runaway and homeless youth). Of these 210 respondents,

- o 156 are funded, in part, by the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA). These 156 represent 60% of all the RHYA programs.
- o 194 are community-based, non-profit organizations; 14 are public/municipal agencies; 2 are Indian tribal organizations.
- o Shelters from all 50 states and Puerto Rico submitted surveys.

To serve the youth in their communities, these 210 agencies maintain 2,815 beds and employ 2,813 full and part time staff. It is important to note that these shelters require staff coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. To complement the staff, these programs recruited 8,418 volunteers who gave 810,513 hours of volunteer time and services. Additionally, these programs generated $2,606,510 worth of in-kind services and non-cash donations.

These shelters each accessed an average of 5 public and private funding services in addition to RHYA funds. These include a mix of other federal funds, state and local government resources, United Way and Community Chest, foundation and corporate grants, contributions from civic and religious organizations, donations by individuals, and proceeds from the respective program's own fundraising efforts or entrepreneurial activities.

The shelters provide an average of 13 different types of service to these troubled youth and their families; either directly or in cooperation with an established referral arrangement. These types of services include:

- o Shelter care
- o Individual counseling
- o Outreach to youth
- o Education
- o Pre-employment training
- o Employment
- o Transportation
- o Mental health services

- o Health services
- o Foster care
- o Family counseling
- o Drug and alcohol counseling
- o Services in cooperation with juvenile court (restitution and diversion)
- o Independent living
- o Recreation
- o Community hotline services
- o Group counseling
- o Legal services
- o Missing children's assistance
- o Aftercare (for the youth after they leave the shelter)

Youth Population Served By the Respondents

These numbers reflect the youth served by the 210 programs for a one year period during 1983-1984. Specifically, these programs:

- o provided at least one night of shelter to 50,354 youth; 27,038 female, 23,316 male.
- o sheltered 19,411 runaways, 6,669 throwaways, and 24,274 other youth, e.g. abused and neglected children placed in the shelter by local child protective service agencies, juvenile court referrals, youth who left home by mutual consent, and other crisis intervention placements.
- o reported serving 5,682 cases of physically abused youth.
- o reported serving 3,439 cases of sexual abuse.
- o provided services to an additional 101,568 nonsheltered youth and/or their families, and responded to 171,931 hotline calls and contacts.
- o were forced to turn away 6,732 youth because the shelter was filled to capacity and there was no available bed space.
- o turned away 3,518 youth because it was determined that the shelter was not appropriate for the youth's needs.
- o had an average positive termination/placement rate of 57%, e.g. the youth were reunited with their families, placed in a foster care or group home, helped to attain an independent living arrangement, or placed in some non-secure detention program.

Expressed Program Needs: Significant

Agency and service needs expressed by the respondents regarding their respective agencies were determined to be "significant" if they were identified by more than 50% (105 of 210) of the respondents. The survey showed the following needs as most critical:

- Better salaries and benefits and more staff. 86% of the agencies cited the need for salary increases for staff and/or the need for more staff. Shelter directors noted that staff turnover was a problem due to low salaries: A caseworker earning $11,000/year is trained by the shelter to work with troubled youth and then leaves to work for a county agency and earn $18,000/year; a degreed counselor can earn more and work under much less stress at the local post office. In addition to the need for adequate salaries, respondents also noted the need for better trained staff, especially for the necessary 24 hour/day coverage. Directors stated that if runaway and homeless youth shelter programs had salary and fringe packages comparable to public and other social service agencies in their locale that these staff would be more likely to stay with the program.

- More Staff Training. 74% of the agencies cited the need for more staff training, especially for working with multi-problem youth and especially in those geographic areas where the shelter is one of the few, if not only, youth service providers. Among the complex "presenting problems" (those personal situations and difficulties the youth have when they arrive at the shelter) those needing the most counseling are incest victimization, sexual abuse, juvenile court involvement, drug and alcohol abuse (including parental abuse), school failure, and medical/dental needs.

- Continuum of services 72% of the agencies cited the need for more outreach, preventive services, and aftercare for the youth in their communities. Preventive services include working with schools, other youth agencies, and community groups to show young people that running away is not the best solution to their problems. Prevention also can include youth and family drop-in counseling and parent education. Outreach includes having streetworkers and other counselors available to go out in those areas of the community during the hours that youth congregate, and reach the youth "on their turf". Aftercare refers to

those follow-up services which youth need after they complete their stay at the shelter, including counseling, education, employment services, family counseling and community referrals.

- Independent Living programs. 67% of the agencies noted that for many of their youth, especially older youth, age 16 and above, there is little chance of returning home, often no home at all, and little possibilitity of finding a foster home. Independent living programs offer a comprehensive mix of services including housing, life skills and money management, employment and training, remedial education, counseling, and other services. Independent living components of runaway and homeless youth shelters enable the staff to continue helping the youths following their stay at the shelter (maximum 15 days), and thereby increase the youths' probability of becoming self-sufficient rather than welfare-dependent.

- Capital improvements of the shelter. 62% of the respondents cited the need for major maintenance and capital improvements of their shelter facility. Shelters comply with state and local licensing, fire and safety, and health codes. Because most shelters are community-based home models, these facilities undergo the same kinds of wear and tear that family dwellings do. Furthermore, these upkeep costs are exacerbated by the sheer volume of youth, staff, and volunteers who use the facility. Federal guidelines limit the amount of RHYA funds which can be used for renovation to 15% of the federal grant. Frozen pipes, a broken heater and the need for electrical rewiring can cause havoc with even the most carefully designed budget.

Expressed Program Needs: Other

"Other" program needs are those which generated less than a 50% response rate (less than 105 of 210 agencies), but given the number of respondents and the compelling nature of the descriptions of these problems, seemed worth noting.

- Mental health services. 41% of the agencies cited the need for more mental health services for the youth and families they serve, particularly access to specialized mental health services, e.g. victims of sexual abuse and incest, suicidal youth, difficult juvenile court referrals, and multi-problem families.

- Foster care and long term placement. 38% of the programs identified the need for specialized foster care homes and other forms of long term placement for youth after they leave the shelter.

- Sexually abused children. 31% of the respondents cited an increase in the number of sexually abused children and youth coming to their shelters. They also identified the need for staff training and other resources for working with these victims.

- Physically abused children. 29% of the programs cited an increase in the number of physically abused youth coming to the shelters.

- Substance abuse. 29% of the programs reported that drug, alcohol, and substance abuse were major problems for their youth.

- Education and employment. 28% of the programs cited the need for alternative education for their youth. 22% of the programs identified specialized employment and training programs as a need.

Are Youth More Troubled?

The survey asked programs to respond to the following question:

> "During the past year, National Network staff and others in Washington, D.C. concerned with runaway and homeless youth services and policy have heard comments from shelter staff to the effect that the youth they serve "are more troubled, have more serious" problems, and require more specialized services" than the youth who were coming to the shelters 5 - 6 years ago. Does the experience of your program during the past year agree or not agree with this generalization? If it agrees, how? For example, some staff identify a greatly increased number of referrals from juvenile court: others note more youth with serious drug and alcohol problems have accelerated staff burn-out. What disturbing trends have you seen in the youth your agency serves and how has your program tried to address those problems?"

61.5% (129) of the programs responded that the youth they are serving seem more troubled and/or multi-problem than the youth they were serving 5-6 years ago.

1.5% (3) of the programs responded that the youth do not seem more troubled or difficult to serve.

37% (78) of the programs chose not to respond or else answered that it is difficult to ascertain a general sense of whether their youth clients are more troubled. Some respondents noted that their youth may seem more multi-problem only because staff had improved in their abilities to recognize and serve such troubled youth, or the community has greater expectations of the programs and refers more difficult cases to them.

COMMENTARY

The National Network's methodology for this study was not designed to generate casual inferences between specific survey answers and categories. The survey offers profiles of runaway, homeless, and other troubled youth and the shelters that serve them by compiling aggregate numbers, descriptive statistics, and anecdotal information. The National Network's intent also was to get a sense of what kinds of statistics shelters are keeping and examine what additional kinds of data shelters might consider recording.

One significant overall comment regarding the numbers included under "Survey Population and Numerical Results" earlier in this section is that several of the totals were under-reported. That is, several respondents noted that they do not keep records on such services, needs, and youth problems, e.g. the numbers of youth turned away, suicidal youth, hotline calls, homeless youth, incidence of sexual abuse, and other categories. Most of the 210 responses to the 8 page questionnaire reflected an adequate degree of recordkeeping by the shelters in terms of the numbers and types of youth. Adequate record-keeping is not a bureaucratic end in itself -- it is a valuable tool which shelter staff use to plan the most appropriate services for the youth, administrators use to determine the cost-effectiveness of their programs, and the agency uses to understand the problems and needs of youth and families in their respective communities.

Two of the most under-reported categories were abuse (physical and sexual) and the number of youth turned away due to no available bed space at the shelter. Many programs noted that some of the sheltered youth who the staff suspected had been physically and/or sexually abused were not counted in their agency's survey response because the abuse was not confirmed or disclosed by the youth during their stay at the shelter. Many youth do not admit to having been abused because they are afraid, either for their own safety or for what might happen to the individual(s) (often family members) who abused them. In some agencies question about abuse are not asked and if volunteered are not recorded due to philosophical policies about confidentiality. One program in New York, reporting 8,532 sheltered youth, is among those not questioning youth about abuse.

In terms of youth who were turned away due to a lack of bed space in the shelter, more than 60% of the respondents stated that they did not keep such records. The standard practice for handling such cases is that the filled-to-capacity shelter refers the youth to other shelters or programs in the area. In many communities, however "other" runaway and homeless youth shelters are few and far between.

The survey findings also dispel the notion that youth who come to runaway and homeless youth shelters are simply young people who are fretting over a routine adolescent squabble with their parents. The problems of these youth and their families are not simple. The reported levels of physical and sexual abuse (again, believed under-reported), the fact that 38% of the programs cited foster care/long term out-of-home placement needs for their youth, and the programs' expressed needs for more specialized mental health services and staff training indicate that shelters are working with youth and families who have serious and complex problems.

Another indicator of the multi-problem, "at-risk" nature of the youth is that the respondents identified 24,274 (48%) of the sheltered youth as having come to the shelter for reasons other than or in addition to being runaway or homeless. Specifically, many of these youth are placed in shelters by child protective service agencies because the youth have been physically exploited, abused or neglected. State and county child welfare agencies refer their youth clients to shelters while they await foster care, group home placement, or reunification with their families. A third segment of this "other" population are those youth who are placed in shelters by juvenile court and law enforcement officials while the youth await their hearings or court placements.

Many of these youth have been runaway, homeless, or on the street for some time, but are at the shelter because of their involvement with some other social service or juvenile justice system. The National Network informally refers to these youth as "systems kids". The successes and difficulties of shelters in working with these systems kids appears to be an issue worthy of further study and analysis. The need for basic education and independent living skills training are clearly priorities for this group.

MEASURES OF THE SHELTER'S EFFECTIVENESS

The survey results point to many achievements and successes which runaway and homeless youth shelters across the nation have attained in working with troubled children, youth, and families. Some of the most notable findings include:

- 57% of the youth are reunited with their families or positively placed in a safe living environment. Similar to the earlier findings, this figure probably is lower than the actual number of youth whose lives and circumstances have been improved by virtue of their involvement with a shelter program. This number may be low in that shelter staff are not always able to maintain contact with and track the progress of the youth and their families for an extended period of time following the youth's stay at the shelter. Some programs had much higher positive placement rates than others. More research is needed to determine if this difference is a function of the intake criteria, the program policies and performance, or of the lack of long term resources available in the community for homeless youth.

  The major significance of this 57% figure is that it offers strong evidence that shelter programs are an effective way of preventing these youth from a future of welfare dependency, criminal activity, adult homelessness, and other personal and family tragedies which result in serious drains on taxpayers and the economy. As policymakers and social science researchers examine the relationship between child abuse, runaway behavior, crime, and unemployment, it is important to note that a nationwide system of community based runaway and homeless youth services exists which offers a cost-effective alternative to a future generation of adults and families who cannot contribute to our nation's economic health and well-being.

  Shelter programs, by virtue of the broad range of services which they provide, represent one of the most effective strategies for interrupting and closing off the apprenticeship of this generation of troubled youth into tomorrow's generation of homeless and disadvantaged adults.

- The shelters provide a comprehensive mix of an average of 13 types of services which is the most effective means of working with the multiple problems faced by these youth and families. One problem for traditional social service agencies that work with at-risk young people and families is that in many cases, those agencies have a somewhat limited scope of services. For example, child protective services have an investigative base and cannot provide services unless there is confirmed abuse or neglect. The criminal justice system cannot mandate services unless there is a "crime" and a violator of law. Public schools

can only admit students who meet their jurisdictional requirements. Some agencies focus on employment and training, but have no remedial education services. Another agency may provide effective crisis intervention and counseling services, but not offer support services such as shelter care, follow-up or health services.

The 210 alternative agency respondents offer an average of 13 different types of services to the youth and families they work with, either directly at the shelter or through an established working relationship with another agency, e.g., health clinic, schools, recreation programs, and others. Resolution of an immediate crisis situation has a limited effect if the necessary support services such as follow-up family counseling, drug and alcohol abuse treatment, education, and other services are not available. By providing a mix of services to these youth and/or ensuring the youth's access to such an individualized package of services, shelter programs help young people turn their lives around by responding to their specific problems and needs.

Those private flexible agencies also serve their communities by filling the gaps that occur in services. In doing so they constitute a "window" into the service patterns and changing needs of high risk youth and families. Good trend reporting from those programs tuned to crisis intervention gives planners and funders insight into the emerging issues.

*Runaway and homeless youth programs are excellent examples of public/private partnerships at the federal, state, and community levels. Given the increasing competitivenes for federal and state funds, runaway and homeless youth shelters appear to be successful in leveraging a variety of funding sources and other resources in order to maintain the effectiveness of their services. Of the 156 respondents that receive funds under the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, their federal grants on the average represent 31.6% of their program's overall budget. A strong case can be made that this federal support validates the importance of these services to other funding sources, local local policymakers, and the overall community. Subsequent to the enactment of the RHYA in 1974, some states -- most notably New York, Florida, Texas, Oklahoma and Wisconsin have passed their own runaway and homeless youth laws which provide additional funds to shelters. The 210 respondents had an average of 5 other funding sources during 1983-1984.

Private sector funds from a diversity of corporations, foundations, family trusts, religious and civic

organizations and other groups support runaway and homeless youth services in every state. But perhaps the strongest private sector confirmation of our nation's concern about these youth is demonstrated by the extent to which individuals volunteer and contribute their time, money and services. The survey showed more than $2.6 million worth of donated in-kind time and services and an additional 810,000 plus hours of volunteer time by more than 8,400 volunteers.

The diverse funding bases which shelter staff and Boards of Directors have worked hard to establish appear to satisfy even the most rigorous of imperatives that runaway and homeless youth programs must access the private sector and community resources if the shelters are to continue receiving public funds.

Additional commentary and analysis of the survey's findings are contained in the next section, "Conclusions and Recommendations."

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Briefly, other findings and conclusions from the survey include:

*Shelters and foster care programs in Pennsylvania, Hawaii, New York, and Kentucky are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of "throwaways" or "pushouts" -- young people who have been thrown out of their homes or are fleeing abuse by their parents. Programs in Iowa and Texas report an increase in the numbers of homeless /pushout youth as a result of the families' economic difficulties.

*Many shelters need more beds; programs have been turning away youth because their shelters were filled to capacity. Last year, an Arizona shelter had no space for 1600 youth; a Connecticut shelter turned away 546 youth and a Texas program 525 youth. Again, the National Network believes that the number of "turnaways" is even higher as 60% of the respondents said they do not collect this data.

*A tremendous need exists for comprehensive mental health services for runaway and homeless youth. Shelters in every state noted that they are seeing more youth with more severe mental health problems, including drug and alcohol abuse, suicidal tendencies, juvenile court involvement, family tensions, and psychiatric problems.

*Rural programs in Texas, Oklahoma, New York, and Wisconsin express the need for additional funds for staff and transportation to serve runaway and homeless youth in adjoining counties.

*Federal, state, and municipal funds expended for shelter services is money well-spent. The cost of shelter services is cheaper and more therapeutic than locking up youth in secure detention facilities. Community-based facilities such as runaway and homeless youth shelters are the most cost-effective and successful methods of helping the vast majority of high risk youth and families, although secure detention (a lock-up, restricted environment) may be necessary for those few serious offender/violent youth who are threats to the community's safety as well as their own.

*TW, in conjunction with other recent national studies, suggests that only 20%-25% of the runaway and homeless youth in the United States receive services from staff and programs that havethe ability and program design to work with these multi-problem youth.

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Conclusions: Three major conclusions from the survey lead to the recommendations detailed at the end of this section. The survey finds that:

1. Shelter programs serving runaway, homeless, and other troubled youth and their families work and work well.

In the ten years since the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) was enacted in 1974, community-based services to runaway and homeless youth have become more sophisticated and responsive to the needs of these youth and their families. Shelters have broadened the types of services they offer, successfully competed for public and private funds, generated support and voluntarism in their own communities, received bi-partisan support from Congress, and most importantly have dealt effectively with an increasingly "at-risk" population of youth.

2. Existing shelter programs have service and program needs.

Implicit in the responses from the 210 agencies is the recognition that in order to maintain and strengthen their effectiveness, programs need more resources for specialized staff training, capital improvement of their facilities, increased capacity for more youth, adequate staff salaries, and additional service components. The need for complementary services for their existing system of services is probably the most crucial need in terms of having a sufficient mix of program responses to the diverse and severe youth and family problems which programs face.

3. There are unserved and underserved communities across the nation that need the kinds of shelter and support services offered by runaway and homeless youth centers.

The vast majority of runaway and homeless youth centers are 7 - 12 bed, home-like shelters. Urban programs expressed the need for additional (but not larger) facilities; rural programs expressed the need for serving adjoining counties or unserved communities. Estimates on the number of youth who run away for only a few days and then return home range from 50% - 60% of the 1.3 million each hear. Many of these youth do come to shelters; 1983 HHS records show that 47.5% (26,690) of all youth sheltered in federally funded centers were short-term runaways. Yet even if these youth who can return home quickly are factored out, there are more than 600,000 youth who are away from home and vulnerable to predators on the streets unless they find safe shelters.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following five major public policy recommendations are derived from the survey and from analysis of the survey results by the National Network Board of Directors, members, and staff:

1. Congress and the Administration should increase the annual appropriation of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to $50 million so that additional shelters can be opened, existing programs can be strengthened to provide more comprehensive services to more troubled youth, and innovative training models and service strategies can be tested, all with the goal of reuniting more families.

2. State governments in states which do not have state runaway and homeless youth acts should follow the leadership of New York, Florida, Wisconsin, Texas, and other states which augment private and federal funds to serve these youth. Another recommendation is that those states (25) which have Children's Trust Funds (state operated quasi-endowment programs) for child abuse prevention programs should include adolescent abuse prevention programs as a funding category. States without Children's Trust Funds should implement them through legislation.

3. The Department of Health and Human Services, specifically its Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), should conduct further national studies and data collection activities on runaway and homeless youth and on the other types of youth, e.g. "systems kids", served by the shelters. The survey shows a need for more information about these youth and their families and about program models and service strategies that work best in helping these youth redirect their lives. ACYF should focus particularly on family dynamics which foster runaway/throwaway behavior, the numbers and causes of homeless youth, the incidence of chronic runaways, sexual abuse, and the need for specialized service components.

Equally as important as the gathering of this information is the distribution and marketying of the findings to runawqay and homeless youth boards of directors and staff, federal, state, and local policymakers, school officials, law-enforcement officials, and other concerned groups.

4. Concerned policymakers, youth service professionals, and others must sustain a public education/media campaign which focuses on the problems and needs of these troubled youth. In order to strengthen and broaden the private sector and community support for services to these youthy, media coverage on the community and national level is necessary for improving services to these youth and their families.

5. The need for coordinated and more efficient services (e.g. crisis intervention, protective services, child welfare, education, health, juvenile justice, job training, mental health.and others) at the federal, state, county, and community levels compels the National Network to recommend that Congress and the administration formulate and enact a "National Youth Policy", patterned after the Older Americans Act. A National Youth Policy would provide opportunities and protections for all of America's youth and would serve as a valuable tool for state and local governments to plan and administer their services to youth and their families at the lowest possible cost. This proposed concept of a national youth policy does not entail a new billion dollar federal entitlement program. Rather, a national youth policy will systematically coordinate existing youth programs and policies while creating a legislative framework in which remaining needs and problems can be addressed.

VI. EPILOGUE: THE KIDS BEHIND THE NUMBERS

This report began with some narrative descriptions about the kinds of runaways and homeless children and youth who are served by the 210 agencies that responded to our national survey. As the report detailed the major results and findings from the eight page questionnaire, a concern arose that the aggregate numbers, program needs, implications, and policy recommendations would blur and detract from our central focus --the problems and needs of each of the more than 1.3 million runaway and homeless youth in America each year.

Many readers of this report have seen the award-winning documentary film "Streetwise" which graphically portrays the tragic lives of juvenile prostitutes and other street kids in Seattle. Other readers also have seen the series of cover stories in Parade Magazine, articles in Readers' Digest, and feature stories about runaways on CBS, NBC, ABC, and Capitol Cities Television. Furthermore, millions of Americans have had first person experiences with runaway and homelesss youth, ranging from having a family member who was a runaway to seeing such youth wandering aimlessly on the street.

This epilogue is offered as a reminder that behind the numbers in this study are the individual lives and futures of a generation of America's at-risk young people. In spite of all the various problems and negative situations in which these youth are involved, they have the same personal aspirations and goals that most other youth have --a good job, a healthy family, a safe place to live, and to be responsible, law-abiding adults.

Many of the youth counted in this survey are without homes and families. A significant number of others have bounced around in foster care, group homes, or other child welfare service placements. Others have fled or been forced out of their homes due to serious abuse, neglect, or breakdown of the family structure.

"To Whom Do They Belong" poses, in fact, a rhetorical question. The blunt fact is that these children and youth belong to all of us , i.e. if the necessary family support, shelter, and other services are not available for these youth, our society will only incur a greater economic liability in terms of paying for the welfare, institutional, law enforcement, adult homeless, metal health, and other inescapable services and programs.

For many of the young people who seek help at runaway and homeless youth centers, their stay represents their last stop in the social services/juvenile justice systems' roller coaster before they became involved with or victimized by more serious problems. While the foremost goal of runaway and homeless youth shelter programs is to reunite these youth with their families, we have learned that in many cases this is not desirable or feasible. America is both a caring nation and a tax-paying nation; both of these factors necessitate support for the kinds of intervention and prevention services provided by runaway and homeless youth programs.

VII. Further References

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL NETWORK AND THE NATIONAL FUND FOR RUNAWAY CHILDREN

The National Network is a nonprofit, membership organization of more than 500 community-based shelter programs and other agencies that serve runaway, homeless, and other troubled youth. The National Network started in 1974 when concerned people across the nation became aware of the urgent needs of children who were away from their homes and in danger on the streets. Parents, community leaders, social workers, and others developed shelter programs in their own areas to help these youth and their families. We then organized to assist each other's programs so that we could more effectively help these troubled, homeless youths.

Our foremost goal now is to improve services and policies which affect the lives of the more than 1.3 million runaway and homeless youth in America. Our national office in Washington, D.C. informs our members and other key groups and individuals on the best ways of serving these youths. We promote training and innovative strategies for working with such "high-risk" youth and their families to help them get their lives together.

We provide regular information through our newsletter, do special mailings, sponsor think tanks for youthworkers, and hold an annual symposium. Our nationwide, computerized telecommunications system enables youth programs to exchange information, research findings, and management improvements. Our public awareness campaigns through the media to citizens across the country helps them understand just how widespread and devestating the problems of these youth are. Finally, we monitor public policy which effects youth services at the national, state, and local levels.

The National Network relies on corporate and foundation grants, membership dues, and individual donors to carry out its work. We apply for and use federal funds only when the needs of the public agency match our youth services priorities.

The National Fund for Runaway Children began in 1982 following a series of articles in Parade magazine by Dotson Rader which graphically described the tragic stories of runaway and homeless street kids. These articles moved thousands of concerned individuals and groups to volunteer their time and donate money to help these troubled young people. Until October 1984, the National Fund was administered by Act Together, Inc., at which time the National Network became the legally responsible group.

The National Fund seeks contributions from individuals, foundations, corporations, and other groups and makes grants to runaway and homeless youth programs. Since its inception, the National Fund has awarded grants to 53 agencies in 29 states and Washington, D.C. The National Fund also responds to thousands of requests from the general public and the media on the problems and needs of these youth. Finally, the National Fund provides support for a select number of public education projects. This report was printed and distributed with National Fund support.

The National Fund does not receive or use federal funds; all contributions are from private sources.

The SOUTHEASTERN NETWORK of Runaway, Youth and Family Services, Inc.

"Effective Service Through Cooperative Efforts" □ 337 S. Milledge Avenue, Suite 209, Athens, Georgia 30605 • Phone (404) 354-4568
Missing Children's Project □ 1215 N.W. 12th Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32601 • Phone (904) 372-4111

August 16, 1985

Ms. Susan Wilhelm
Sub-Committee on Human Resources
472 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ms. Wilhelm:

The Southeastern Network of Runaway, Youth and Family Services regrets that it was not able to attend the hearings on the status of runaway and homeless youth of the House Sub-Committee on Human Resources on July 25, 1985.

Members of our organization are greatly concerned with this issue and have considerable expertise to share. The attached testimony reflects the concerns of our membership. We would appreciate your including this testimony in the official record of these hearings.

Please feel free to contact us should you desire further information.

Sincerely,

Gail L. Kurtz

Gail L. Kurtz, ACSW
Executive Director

GK/je

Enclosure

Testimony Submitted to the Sub-committee on Human Resources, United States House of Representatives

Submitted by Southeastern Network of Runaway, Youth and Family Services, Inc.

The Southeastern Network of Runaway, Youth & Family Services is a private, non-profit membership organization of 38 youth service agencies in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. An estimated 120,000 youth run away each year in southeastern states. Over 50,000 of these youth come to our member agencies for shelter, food, counseling and other kinds of help every year.

These children have multiple and serious problems. Many of them run from abusive or alcoholic parents. With the help of our runaway programs, their problems can be addressed and families can often be successfully reunited. The availability of 24-hour open-door runaway facilities prevent bigger problems: permanent family splits, exposure of youth to those who would exploit them for criminal purposes, downward spirals into increasingly anti-social activities. Runaway shelters offer an alternative to detention or institutionalization for youth who are in trouble and need help.

The problems of youth have grown more complex in recent years. Runaway shelters have responded to this by expanding program services to offer job training, community preventative education, drug rehabilitation and independent living skills for youth approaching adulthood. Training for youth service professionals have been expanded to incorporate such topics as teenage suicide and the treatment of sexual victimization.

Runaway centers are facing expanding needs to maintain their effective and efficient service delivery system. According to a study prepared by The National Network of Runaway & Youth Services, Inc., "A Profile of Ameria's Runaway & Homeless Youth and The Programs That Help Them (July, 1985), the following issues were substantiated:

- Runaway centers are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of "throwaway" or "pushout" youth. Centers need expanded services to assist this troubled population.
- Many shelters need more beds. Youth in need are being turned away because shelters are filled to capacity.
- Centers need access to resources to provide more comprehensive mental health services for runaway and homeless youth.

It is important that funding keep pace with the needs for youth services expressed throughout our region. Many youth and family needs go unmet due to lack of available services. We commend Congressional support of the development of new youth-serving programs. At the same time, it is important to maintain existing programs. They have done a tremendous job on shoestring budgets, but the needs for increased services and training have stretched their resources to the limit.

We must not penalize agencies who have demonstrated effectiveness by cutting their funding and shifting it to new programs. Both are necessary. Already-established programs have developed wide-spread community support and active partnerships with area businesses. Their efforts have resulted in decreased reliance on federal dollars. These agencies are the role models and teachers of our new programs. Their innovations and successes are shared and duplicated through the Southeastern Network's system of offering support and expertise to new agencies.

These professionals have demonstrated their commitment to quality youth services and their ability to provide these services. Today's youth need their help now, more than ever before.

FLORIDA NETWORK OF YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

345 SOUTH MAGNOLIA DRIVE
SUITE E-26
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301
(904) 878-1368

August 7, 1985

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(St. Petersburg)

Ms. Susan Wilhelm
Sub-Committee on Human Resources
402 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ms. Wilhelm:

It is my understanding that the House Sub-Committee on Human Services met on July 25, 1985, to hold hearings on the status of runaway and homeless youths. Although we were unable to attend that meeting, the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services is extremely interested in this topic.

The Florida Network is a voluntary coalition of programs providing services to runaway and homeless youths and their families. There are currently fourteen established programs in Florida with two additional programs scheduled to begin within the next three months. During fiscal year 1984-85, the Florida programs served over 7,000 runaway and homeless youths, many of whom were from other states.

The Florida Network Office is responsible for providing a variety of different services to its member agencies. I have enclosed a copy of our brochure which provides a brief description of the types of services we offer. All of the Florida programs are expected to provide a diversity of services to children and their families. These services include:

1. Shelter and food;
2. Individual and family counseling;
3. Outreach; and,
4. Aftercare (when resources to do so are available).

Florida is one of a few states whose legislature has taken an active part in the funding of services for runaways and homeless youths. All of the shelters which serve runaways and homeless youths and their families in Florida are funded partially by the State Legislature. These resources, coupled with the additional funding provided by the Federal government, are essential to the delivery of quality services to these children and their families.

Since the Florida Network was unable to attend the Sub-Committee hearings, I am enclosing written testimony for your review and consideration. I hope it will be beneficial to you during your deliberations on this issue. In addition, I am enclosing the following information:

1. A copy of the Governor's Task Force Report on Runaway and Troubled Youths;
2. A copy of the Statewide Task Force Report on the Homeless;
3. A brief paper on prevention, developed by the Florida Network;
4. A listing of Florida Network member agencies (excluding one of the new programs scheduled to open within the next three months).

I hope this information will be beneficial to you. Should you have any questions regarding this correspondence, or should you desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (904) 878-1368.

Sincerely,

Bill Bentley
Executive Director

BB/jtf
Enclosures

Testimony for the House Sub-Committee

Addressing Runaways and Homeless Youths

Submitted by The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, Inc.

Annually over 20,000 Florida children leave their homes or are pushed out by their parents. Knowledgeable state officials estimate that over 30,000 runaway and homeless youths (which includes out-of-state children) roam Florida's streets annually. Florida's runaway programs report that an average of 33 percent of the children they served in 1984 were victims of physical or sexual abuse in their home situations. In our urban centers, the percentages were considerably higher.

The deinstitutionalization of status offenders has been one of Florida's priorities for over a decade. Florida was among the first states to decriminalize status offenses (i.e., running away, truancy, ungovernability) in their statutes governing youthful behavior. Florida in 1983 was also one of the first states to establish in its statutes a "Runaway Youth and Family Act." However, Florida, like many other states, has experienced the frustration which accompanies not having the resources to implement effectively the types of service continuums necessary to meet the needs of many of their children. This is especially true of services for runaway children.

In first time or minor cases of status behaviors, intake workers often feel that they have few resources to apply to the case. Therefore the cases "fall between the cracks" with little or no attention. When cases reach the point that a dependency petition is filed, they often encounter an attitude stressing the authority of the court rather than the needs of the child and the family. Disobeying the order of the judge may result in detention for violation of a valid court order, an action allowed by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Florida Supreme Court.

Our approach in Florida is three-fold. First, we want to prevent status (offense) behaviors initially (primary prevention) or "nip them in the bud" early-on (secondary prevention). Second, we want to provide an alternative for the handling of status behavior cases that satisfies the needs of overburdened intake workers and meets the needs of the children and their families. Finally, we need to reduce the number of cases in which judicial intervention occurs (diversion) and thereby reduce the potential number of status behavior youth in detention for violation of valid court orders.

During fiscal year 1983-84, 1,558 non-offender youth in Florida were placed in secure detention through use of the valid court order. Although locking up the child may get him/her off the streets temporarily, it is only a "stop-gap" measure which addresses the symptom and not the problem. This action also places the full burden for the problem on the child when available research indicates clearly that runaway and other status offense behavior is a reflection of more serious family dysfunction.

Following the recommendations of the Statewide Task Force Report on Runaway and Troubled Youth (1984), a system of "full service centers" has been proposed to provide services to status behavior youths and their families. The plan stresses prevention and non-judicially ordered intervention to accomplish the goals of less penetration into the formal system by status behavior youth, especially involvement which might lead to their being detained in secure lock-up.

The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services supports strongly the recommendations of the Task Force Report on Runaway and Troubled Youth (reference enclosed report) and is firmly committed to the implementation of a full service continuum for runaway and other status behavior youth. This continuum of care would provide the service alternatives needed to minimize the placement of these youths in secure detention. We believe that tne placement of these youths in secure detention serves only to exascerbate an already difficult family situation. Moreover, these non-criminal youths are exposed to juveniles who have long histories of delinquent behaviors. Such exposure does little to provide the non-offender with positive role models.

While we recognize and understand the frustrations experienced by judges, law enforcement, and others in the child welfare system who work with runaways and other status offender youths, the endorsement of secure detention for these youths is not a position the Florida Network can support. One of our primary goals is to ensure that we are not punishing chidlren because of the system's inability to meet their needs. We support striving to find solutions to the problem and not overreacting to the symptoms.

FLORIDA NETWORK OF YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

Over 1 million children run away from home each year in our country. Although we might like to believe that this problem doesn't occur in Florida, we know better. Each year over 20,000 Florida children leave their homes or are pushed out by their parents. Many are victims of abuse and neglect. Many will become victims of abuse and exploitation if left to their own devices to survive.

In answer to this problem, there are 13 agencies throughout the State of Florida dedicated to helping runaway and homeless children. These agencies provide a variety of services including shelter, specialized counseling, and follow-up services. Working toward the primary goal of reuniting and strengthening families, these agencies often prevent a child's needless involvement in the juvenile justice system.

The **Florida Network of Youth and Family Services** is a private non-profit organization of agencies who serve runaway children throughout the State of Florida. By maintaining a statewide coordination office since 1976, the Florida Network has provided member agencies with one voice to address the concerns of Florida's troubled children and families. As a result of the Network's efforts, new attention has been paid to the problems of Florida's children in crisis.

The Florida Network provides a wide range of services to its member agencies which include:

- A program certification process to insure the highest quality of service to children through the implementation of statewide standards.
- Comprehensive training programs to improve program operation and service delivery.
- Technical assistance to agencies on subjects such as resource development, advocacy, and funding.
- Statewide representation on issues relating to children and families.

The Florida Network offers the general community:

- Updated information and data collection concerning runaway and dependent children.
- Workshops and training programs for agencies, policy-makers, and the media regarding the needs of Florida's troubled children and families.
- Cost effective alternatives to confining Florida's dependent children in detention centers.
- The opportunity to effect positive change in the lives of Florida's children.

The Florida Network has four short-term goals:

- Implementation of the statewide continuum of services for runaway, troubled youth and their families.
- Ensuring the delivery of the highest quality of services to runaway and troubled youths and their families through the implementation of the statewide standards.
- The expansion and strengthening of the statewide network of programs providing services to runaway and troubled youth and their families.
- Education of decision makers and the general public regarding the problems and needs of families in crisis.

The Role of Prevention in Dealing With Runaway/Troubled Youth and Their Families

Over 1 million children run away or are pushed out of their homes each year in our country. A recent survey of runaway shelters nationwide found that over 36 percent of the children served had been victims of physical or sexual abuse. Although we might like to believe that this problem doesn't occur in Florida, we know better. Annually over 20,000 Florida children leave their homes or are pushed out by their parents. Florida runaway programs report that an average of 33 percent of the children served in our programs were victims of physical or sexual abuse in their home situations.

When runaway children are left to their own devices on the street, the probability of exploitation and abuse is increased. The likelihood that they may turn to criminal activity to survive is also heightened. With shelter programs which serve runaway and troubled youths and their families, the immediate crisis of a runaway episode can be quelled. Adequate programming will allow services which go to the source of the problem behavior, and which attempt to prevent runaway behavior from occurring. Our experience suggests that the child's runaway behavior is generally symptomatic of deeper family problems.

A major focus of runaway programs in Florida is to prevent continued family disintegration. These family problems, if not addressed effectively, often lead to domestic violence, child abuse, runaway episodes, and other status behaviors (e.g., ungovernability and truancy).

Prevention is a key element in breaking the cycle of family dysfunction. Currently few runaway programs in Florida are able financially to provide the level of prevention services needed to impact effectively on family disintegration in its early stages. The Statewide Task Force Report on Runaway and Troubled Youth recognized the key role of prevention services in dealing with family problems which lead to runaway behavior and the breakup of the family unit.

The Governor's Fiscal Year 1985-86 budget recommendation does not provide an adequate funding level to meet the service needs of runaway/troubled youths and their families throughout Florida. There are currently 13 residential shelters in our state which specifically serve these youths and their families. The 1984 Statewide Task Force Report identified the need for at least 10 new programs and improvements to the current shelters serving these clients throughout the state.

There are tangible aspects to this lack of funding. Without adequate shelter resources for runaway/troubled youths, the use of secure detention (lock-up) is promoted as the method for dealing with these children. During FY1983-84, 1,558 non-criminal children were placed in secure detention because there were inadequate programs available to deal with them. Aside from the injustice of this practice, placement in detention not only is costly but also increases the probability of further involvement in the juvenile justice system. Adequate prevention services should reduce the demand for out-of-home placements of children.

Florida Network of Youth and Family Services
Member Agency Addresses

Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, Inc.
Bill Bentley, Executive Director
345 South Magnolia Drive, Suite E26
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Diane Alexander, Program Director
Family Mediation Center
1266 N. Paul Russell Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Shirley Aron, Executive Director
Switchboard of Miami
35 S.W. 8th Street
Miami, Florida 33170

Linda Williams
~~Tom Brown~~, Program Director
Lippman Shelter
1135 N.W. 7th Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33311

Barbara Cloud, Executive Director
Anchorage Children's Home of Bay County, Inc.
5521 E. Highway 98
Panama City, Florida 32404

Rev. Peter Diebenow, Executive Director (Lippman Shelter)
Lutheran Church
3100 N. 75th Avenue
Hollywood, Florida 33024

David Graham, Executive Director
Arnette House
P.O. Box 1544
Ocala, Florida 32678

Karen Leathers
~~Vicki Jarvis~~, Executive Director
Corner Drugstore, Inc.
1128 S.W. 1st Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Larry Jones, Administrator
Great Oaks Village
1718 E. Michigan Avenue
Orlando, Florida 32806

Vernon P. Langford, Executive Director
Youth Shelter of Southwest Florida
2240 Broadway
Fort Myers, Florida 33901

George Magrill, Executive Director
Youth and Family Alternatives
P.O. Box 1073
New Port Richey, Florida 33552

Ken McCullough, Program Director
Youth Alternatives
1023 Hamilton Court
Daytona Beach, Florida 32014

Norm McDonald, Executive Director
Youth Services Centers, Inc.
P.O. Box 625
Merritt Island, Florida 32952

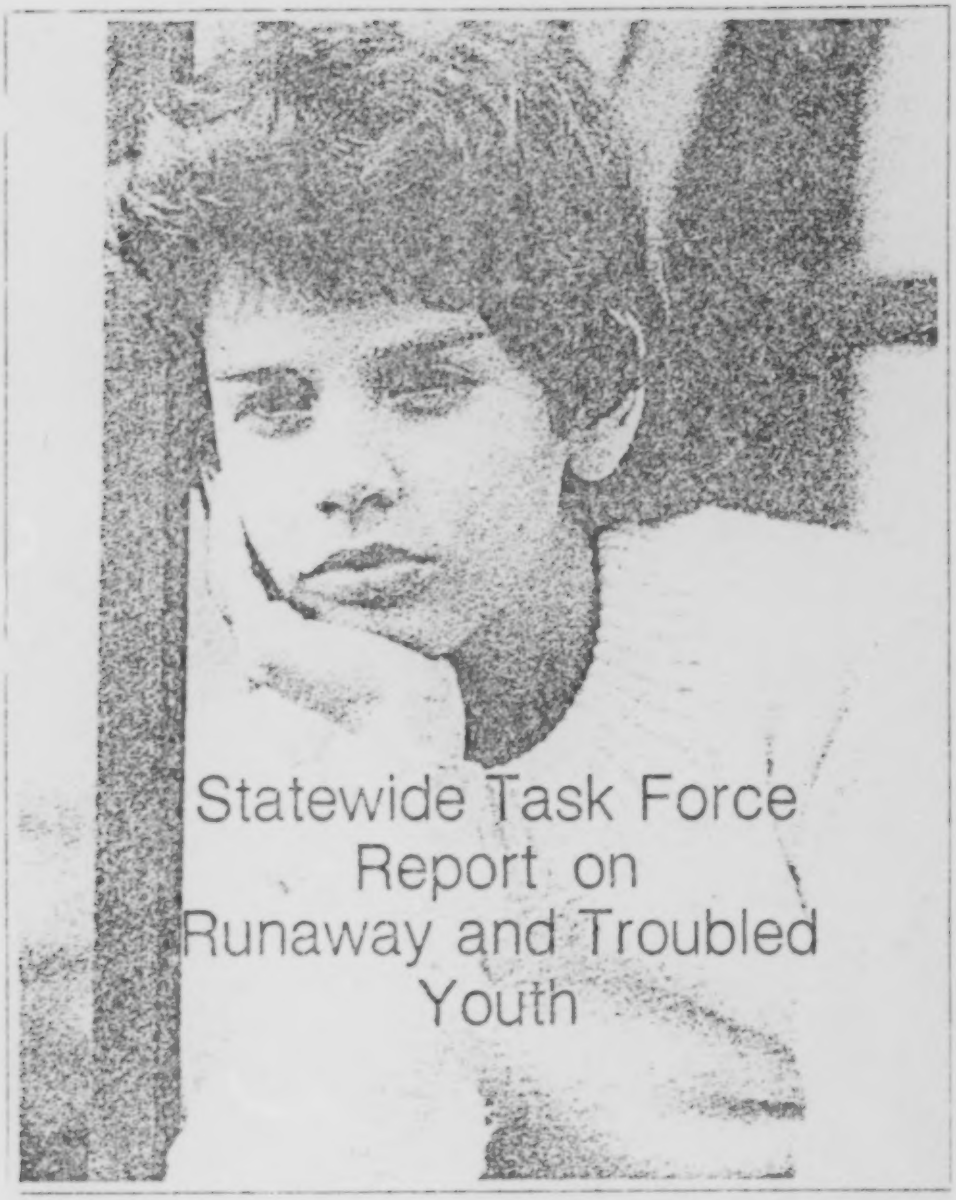
Roy W. Miller, Executive Director
Alternative Human Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 13087
St. Petersburg, Florida 33733

Richard Moran, Program Director
The Miami Bridge
1145 S.W. 11th Street
Miami, Florida 33136

Jan Morris, Program Director
Youth Shelter of Southwest Florida
2240 Broadway
Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Tom Patania, Executive Director
Youth Crisis Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 16567
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

Leon Polhill, Director
Hillsborough Dept. of Children's Services
P.O. Box 271489
Tampa, Florida 33618



February 1984

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

HRS STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Mr. David H. Pingree
Secretary
Department of Health and
Rehabilitative Services
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Secretary Pingree:

I am pleased to submit to you the report of the Statewide Task Force on Runaway and Troubled Youth as required by Senate Bill 626 of the 1983 legislative session.

At the organizational meeting of the statewide task force held on September 22, 1983, it became clear that our first order of business was to define "troubled youth" so as to better understand the scope of our task. In reviewing the bill and its origin, the statewide conference on runaways held in early 1983 in Tampa, and in recognition of the time restraints in which we had to comply, it was concluded that we must limit our scope to the runaway and children at "high risk" of running. It was also clearly understood that in dealing with the stereotypical runaway, or the high risk potential runaway we were, in reality, often dealing with abused or neglected children, as well as the habitual truant, ungovernable and the "throwaways."

The task force then decided to reconvene on November 17 and 18, after the November 4 submittal of the district-wide task force reports, review those reports, break into subcommittees and deal with the recommendations of the districts and the requirements of the bill. Leon Botkin, representing State Attorney Janet Reno from District 11, chaired the Data Collection and Evaluation Subcommittee and George Magrill, Executive Director of District 5's Youth and Family Alternatives Program, chaired the Program Subcommittee. We subsequently met on December 1 and 2 and January 3-5.

While examining the reports of the eleven HRS Districts it was evident the problems of the runaway were complex and while each district had their own priorities, there were several common threads running statewide. The Legislature had already seen the need for a statewide system of data collection. To carry this one step further, the district task forces saw a need for a central location in each district, responsible for data collection. It was felt that this Centralized Intake would facilitate the statewide data collection system and assure the best possible service linkages and follow-up capabilities.

In addition to the above, the plan includes recommendations detailing the implementation of a continuum of services statewide, involving a two-tiered design which will enable every county in the state to best approach the problem on a local basis.

The task force has made other recommendations which we feel will insure the most efficient and effective operation of the programs recommended. These include a statewide training vehicle and ongoing monitoring capabilities.

Another universal agreement amongst all the district-wide task forces, as well as the statewide task force members, was the appreciation of the Legislature's recognition of the absolute necessity of dealing with the problems of troubled youth in Florida. We trust the willingness to deal with this will extend through this legislative session and carry out what this task force sees as possible solutions to the multifaceted problems of our troubled youth.

As chairperson of the Statewide Task Force for Troubled and Runaway Youth, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals. These people have demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to the youth of Florida throughout the many hours of hard work, cooperation and willingness to give 100 percent of their time and expertise:

Darlene Roche', Ph.D.
Component Director of Youth
Lakeview Center, Inc.
Pensacola, Florida

Ellen Hoffenberg, Esquire
Program Director
Florida Guardian ad Litem Program
Tallahassee, Florida

Steve Beville, Investigator
Public Defender's Office
Fifth Judicial Circuit
Ocala, Florida

The Honorable Dorothy H. Pate
Circuit Judge
Fourth Judicial Circuit
Jacksonville, Florida

George Magrill
Executive Director
Youth and Family Alternative Program
New Port Richey, Florida

Evie Wilson
Legislative Aide for Senator Betty Castor
Tampa, Florida

Roger N. McDonald
Executive Director
Crosswinds Runaway Center
Merritt Island, Florida

Michael B. Boland
Direct Services Supervisor
HRS District 8
Fort Myers, Florida

Steve Newell, Sergeant
Office-in-Charge Juvenile Affairs
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department
West Palm Beach, Florida

Mrs. Judy Collins
Lake City, Florida
Leon H. Botkin
Assistant State Attorney
Chief, Juvenile Division
Eleventh Judicial Circuit
Miami, Florida

Amanda Cannon
Office of Evaluation and
Management Review
HRS Headquarters
Tallahassee, Florida

Donald E. Darling
Administrator
Department of Education
Tallahassee, Florida

Dave May
Program Administrator
Children, Youth and Families
Program Office
Tallahassee, Florida

David Schmeling
Alcohol, Drug Abuse and
Mental Health Program Office
Tallahassee, Florida

Ms. Robin A. Donaldson
Tallahassee, Florida

Jim Bryan
Children, Youth and Families
Program Office
HRS Headquarters
Tallahassee, Florida

Robert M. Peterson
Children, Youth and Families
Program Office
HRS Headquarters
Tallahassee, Florida

Bob Webb
Children, Youth and Families
Program Office
HRS Headquarters
Tallahassee, Florida

I sincerely hope that you will concur that this plan, if funded, will effectively serve these children for whom we are all concerned.

Sincerely,

Toni J. Siskin

Toni J. Siskin
Chairperson
Task Force on Troubled Youth

Executive Summary

In 1983 the Legislature passed Senate Bill 626. This bill was titled "an act relating to runaway youths, providing legislative intent; providing definitions; providing for the development of a statewide plan for handling runaway youths, providing for the development of specific licensing criteria for runaway youth centers; providing for the establishment of a statewide task force and district task force; requiring the adoption of licensure rules by a time certain; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date."

Essentially, the bill provided that the department will submit a statewide plan to the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate and the Governor by February 1, 1984. The bill stated that this plan should address the following topics:

- Needs assessments for the state and for each district;
- Criteria and procedures for handling and referral of troubled youths and runaway youths using the least restrictive alternatives available;
- Provisions for contacting parents or guardians;
- Policy for coordinating relationships between involved agencies, runaway youth centers, law enforcement agencies, and the department;
- Statewide statistics on client groups;
- Funding formulas for runaway youth centers which provide standard services and receive state funds; and
- Standards and program goals for runaway youth centers with emphasis on early intervention and aftercare.

The bill further mandated standard services for runaway youth centers to include, but not be limited to:

- Programs for outreach and prevention for troubled youths and their families;
- Early intervention counseling services for troubled youths and their families with 24-hour access geared toward crisis or time of need intervention;

- o Uniform and confidential intake and records systems;
- o Provision for aftercare including individual and family counseling services;
- o Programs for advocacy for client population and community support; and
- o Provisions for case management and referral from service to service.

During August 1983 a statewide task force was appointed by David Pingree, Secretary of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The members of this task force represented the following groups: local law enforcement, the juvenile section of the conference of circuit court judges, the Guardian ad Litem Program, the school board of a local school district, local government, office of public defender, office of state attorney, medical community with responsibility for treatment of physical or mental problems of children and youth, single intake of the department, runaway youth centers, a parent of a runaway youth, a person who has been a runaway youth within five years, private or public program, group or organization with recognized expertise in working with runaway youths and their families, a respresentative of the Department of Education, Program Director of the Children, Youth and Families Program Office, Program Director of the Office of Evaluation, Program Director of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Program Office.

During the latter part of 1983 the statewide task force met to develop a statewide plan for troubled youth. The task force addressed many difficult issues in their meetings. The use of secure emergency shelter care was addressed because many of the local HRS district plans recommended that secure shelters should be considered as acceptable facilities for the placement of troubled or runaway youths. The statewide task force discussed this issue at great length, but was not able to reach a consensus or agreement on the subject. The complexity of this issue was further compounded by several factors, predominantly, the difficulty of collecting data to substantiate the affirmative need for secure shelter. The task force also felt there should be more time to evaluate the possible reduction of this need as a result of the implementation of the less intrusive service delivery system as outlined in this plan. Also, this approach better follows the intent of Senate Bill 626. However, the task force strongly recommends that the issue of secure placement of dependent children not be forgotten, but continually monitored and another task force given sufficient time to realistically deal with the problem.

The task force plan calls for a network of services in each HRS district with accessibility to all counties in Florida. A two-tiered service network was developed to accommodate the vast

geography and population distributions of the state. The plan provides for a continuum of services for all runaways or potential runaways with emphasis on early intervention and case management.

The full service center containing nonresidential services and residential services is the core of this network of services. The nonresidential component is designed toward preventing a youth from leaving home, being thrown out of their home, or running away from home. The nonresidential program will have a central intake unit with professional intake counselors providing outreach services. It is expected that the central intake counselor will be "on call" and if necessary visit a child's home and provide crisis intervention services, individual counseling services, family counseling services or, when appropriate, refer the child to other services. If family problems are such that temporary "crisis care" is required the youth may be placed in a volunteer crisis home with parental permission until the child can be returned home. These volunteer crisis homes will be recruited and screened by a runaway service facility and approved by the department prior to children being placed in the home. After a brief stay in a volunteer crisis home the youth may be returned home with continued social services being provided by the central intake counselor or by other community social service agencies. If these services do not alleviate the problem(s) the child is experiencng the youth can be referred to the residential component of the full service facility.

The residential component of a full service facility will contain counselors who provide quality family counseling, individual counseling, and crisis intervention services during the time the youth resides in the facility. The central intake counselor will retain overall responsibility for the child and provide a case management function. When the child is released from residential care the central intake counselor will provide follow-up services.

The statewide task force strongly recommended that this continuum of services be implemented. When in place these residential centers with outreach services will provide prevention and intervention services which will be preventative in nature and cost beneficial in the long run.

It is the firm opinion of the task force that if this plan is approved and funded, the capability to provide quality services at the earliest point possible will not only reduce subsequent runaway acts but will diminish the need for costly secure facilities and long-term institutional care for this client group.

CHAPTER 1
Introduction

I. Purpose

In 1983 the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 626; the "Runaway Youth and Family Act," making Florida only the second state in the nation to enact such a measure. The Act provides for: a statewide plan for handling runaway youth; licensing criteria and rules for runaway youth centers; statewide and district task forces; and, appropriations. The purpose of the act is to assist runaway youth and strengthen their families through a continuum of prevention, early intervention, community outreach, short-term residential care, aftercare, and counseling programs.

This plan identifies district system designs, program criteria and standards, statewide coordination needs and funding requirements to achieve the legislative mandate.

II. History

State involvement in the parent-child relationship dates back to the early nineteenth century when our nation initiated debate on whether public interference was warranted when a child's normal socialization and development was inhibited. More progressive thought during this era viewed the problem child as a result of poor environmental conditions. It was argued that the role of the state should not be to punish children who were merely products of circumstance, but to assist them through corrective and supportive intervention. The growth of such thinking culminated in the early twentieth century with the establishment of the juvenile court. Legal justification for this institution was provided through the doctrine of parens patriae which maintained that in the absence of parental care, it was the state's responsibility to assume the parenting role. With the creation of the juvenile court, children were, for the most part, removed from the jurisdiction of the criminal court. It was thought that the juvenile judge could intervene with correct treatment rather than punitive measures. Concomitant with the creation of the juvenile court was the removal of many of the civil rights and protections that were afforded to children who had previously entered the criminal court system (right of trial, requirement of legal representation, etc.). It was felt these protections were not needed in the juvenile court, since this institution was designed both to support the child and to remove the individual from punitive treatment.

Unfortunately, the realities of the juvenile court have not coincided with the philosophy of its creation. Traditionally, the juvenile court has had to utilize delinquent youth facilities for status offenders (youth who have committed acts that would

not be considered criminal if committed by adults) due to a lack of more appropriate resources. The wisdom of incarcerating runaways and truants in the same facilities as the serious juvenile offender (those accused of murder, rape, armed robbery, etc.) has been strongly questioned and protested by advocates for children. Studies of the juvenile justice system have suggested that status offenders are handled more harshly than delinquents and may be detained for longer periods of time.

The Gault decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967 stated that the juvenile court's assertion of its power under the parens patriae doctrine had denied juveniles their procedural rights guaranteed under the constitution. This decision afforded due process to these youth.

Concern over the treatment of status offenders ultimately resulted in federal legislation--the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974. At the heart of the JJDP Act is the issue of how to remove status offenders from involvement with law enforcement and the juvenile justice system.

In order to comply with the Act and to receive federal funding for a variety of juvenile justice programs, states are required to mandate deinstitutionalization of status offenders. The act prohibits the dispersal of federal formula grant funds to any state whose laws do not differentiate populations. Title III of the Act, which is administered separately by the Youth Development Bureau (YDB) within the Department of Health and Human Services, is the federal instrument for developing community-based alternatives for runaway youth.

In response to this federal initiative, there has been an extraordinarily high level of state legislative activity in recent years. During the last decade three-quarters of the states have either enacted entirely new codes or made substantial modifications in existing codes affecting children and youth.

The revision of state codes has centered on two main issues: 1) how state services should be organized for effective service delivery and 2) how youth should be classified or labeled to receive services. The second is a heated issue in the states. The heart of the controversy is a jurisdictional question: whether non-criminal behavior, of which runaways are one example, should be handled in juvenile court where legal mechanisms are used or by the state child welfare system which emphasizes treatment.

Despite current Florida law which defines truancy, runaway and ungovernable as acts of dependency, many youngsteres are referred to court, sentenced to detention or committed to delinquency programs.

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By separating status offenders from delinquents, Florida, in the last few years, has also notably changed the way status offenders are treated. Status offenders are housed separately and the secure detention of status offenders is prohibited with the exception of those who violate a valid court order. As a result of these changes recent research in Florida, as well as other states, show status offenders are no longer treated more harshly than delinquents. The exception to this finding may be the recent practice of sentencing truants into detention by many courts in Florida.

III. National Perspective

According to a September 1983 report by the United States General Accounting Office, "estimates of the number of runaways and homeless youths nationwide range from 733,000 to 1,300,000." These statistics do not take into account the number of those children who are "at risk" of running.

Thousands of these children enter the doors of what are generically known as runaway programs. Some experts have referred to these youth as the "system spillovers,"--youth who have become entangled in the web of juvenile justice and child welfare systems and whose needs continue to go unmet.

The Youth Development Bureau (YDB) has established 169 runaway youth programs nationwide. Although these programs do not constitute all of the programs in the country, the YDB programs can be viewed as a successful model. In 1981, through YDB efforts, 133,000 youth received services on a one-time drop-in basis; 45,000 received more extensive services and the National Communication System handled 200,000 calls from youth and their families.

Runaway youth centers are diverse in structure, ranging from free-standing emergency shelters to multipurpose youth service agencies. All programs provide the core services mandated by the Runaway Youth Act; emergency shelter on a 24 hour, seven day a week basis, counseling and follow-up services to runaway and homelesss youth.

According to the U.S. General Accounting Office national study 51% of the client population had learned about the centers from professional service providers, police and school personnel. The remaining 49% had learned about them on radio or television, from a hot-line, or from parents or friends. About 33% of the youths had actually been brought to a center by professional service providers, police, or school personnel, 28% had arrived by themselves, and 21% had been accompanied by parents or relatives. Fifteen percent had been brought by friends or staff, and the remaining 3% were not initially counseled at the center.

Further findings show youth and community service personnel believed that the greatest strength of the centers was the fact that shelter programs exist. Other strengths mentioned by those interviewed were the counseling and crisis intervention services, family involvement and a dedicated, well qualified staff.

The youths believed that they would have remained on the streets or possibly stayed with friends if the centers had not existed. Only 7% of the youths and 2% of the parents interviewed believed that their family problems would have been resolved without the help of the centers.

The centers' weaknesses, as mentioned frequently by professional service providers, school personnel, and center staff, included inadequate funding, limited shelter capacities, too few staff, and the limited professional experience and training of some staff members.

Suggestions for improvement included the expansion of outreach and prevention services, more networking with other agencies, physical changes to the shelters, and more activities and training for youths during their stay there.

IV. Changes in Florida Law

In response to federal legislation, Florida, in the spring of 1975 eliminated the legal category "Children in Need of Supervision (CINS)." Prior to this action, runaways, truants and ungovernable children fell under the CINS classification and were considered and treated as delinquents. Coinciding with the removal of the CINS classification was the expansion of the definition of "dependent" to include runaways, truants and first time adjudicated ungovernable children. Ungovernable children who were adjudicated for the second and subsequent times could be classified as delinquent. Since 1978 Florida law provides that runaways, truants and ungovernables are treated as dependent children.

Recognizing the continued legislative debate concerning status offenders, particularly runaways, a statewide runaway conference was held in Tampa in early 1983. This conference was organized by the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services with HRS District 5's Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc., and Alternative Human Services. It was the decision of the conference participants to draft legislation to be forwarded to the Florida Legislature regarding the need for a statewide plan for runaway youth.

The conference was chaired by Senator Jeanne Malchon from St. Petersburg, and was attended by legislators, juvenile court judges and other juvenile justice system representatives, law enforcement and school officials, local advocacy and service

leagues, as well as runaway center directors and staff. The conference culminated in a proposed Florida Runaway Youth and Family Act which was forwarded to the Legislature for consideration.

Senators John Vogt, Betty Castor, and Jeanne Malchon and Representative Jon Mills' prime sponsorship of the act enabled formal discussion of the runaway problem in Florida. The Legislature's enactment of Senate Bill 626 concluded that the state has a role in preventing runaway episodes and in reuniting families; that running away is in fact directly linked to problems in family relationships; and that runaways who do not receive services at the time of need often become involved in criminal activity. The Legislature also concluded that the most cost-effective means of helping runaways is through early intervention, counseling and assistance by community-based programs in the least restrictive setting. The Legislature went on to mandate the following in conjunction with Florida's existing runaway centers.

1) A statewide plan be developed to address the needs of runaway youth.

2) A continuum of service for runaways be implemented assuring use of least restrictive alternatives.

3) Standard criteria be used in licensing runaway centers and evaluating their performance and effectiveness.

4) A plan for standardized data collection be drafted.

V. The Task Force's Approach

Any plan attempting to deal with the problems of troubled youth, must begin by identifying the range of children and families for whom the plan is developed. For the purpose of definition this plan identifies "troubled youth" to include runaway youth and youth at risk of running away.

The behaviors exhibited by youth are recognized as attempts to cope with family problems such as ineffective communication, marriage conflicts, and discipline. Therefore, the needs of troubled youth are best addressed by responding to problems within the family system.

Services to troubled families should promote the responsibilities of family members and the development of more effective communication and coping skills. One of the greatest barriers in working with families is that of the family recognizing their own problems. The efforts of all services and information to families should be directed toward viewing the behaviors of troubled youth to be problems on which all family members must work.

Early identification and intervention is the key to successful treatment through changing behavior patterns. Prevention and intervention must be utilized at an early enough stage to emphasize and preserve family strengths.

A uniform approach among schools and agencies in conducting early assessments of families at risk when symptoms first emerge would facilitate early identification and treatment. Such a uniform assessment methodology could be adopted by the community.

Integral parts of a uniform approach among schools and agencies are:

1) The capability to exchange and share information and

2) The provisions of outreach services in a continuum of services to at-risk families.

Outreach services are seen as such an integral part of a community plan that special emphasis should be given to developing, managing, and evaluating them. Outreach services extend from public information through emergency crisis services to services to families of children in special residential treatment programs. Meeting the needs of troubled youth and their families requires both a carefully planned statewide initiative and a community effort. This should be achieved through the cooperative and concerted efforts of public and private agencies and organizations. This coordinated approach is addressed in this plan.

CHAPTER 2
Operational Plan for the Implementation of Senate Bill 626

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SENATE BILL 626 - HANDLING OF TROUBLED YOUTH
Revised August 18, 1983

ACTION STEP 1: Develop Planning and Implementation Strategies

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
1.1	Designate lead responsibility for the implementation of Senate Bill 626.	PDCYF	7/7/83	7/7/83	Completed
1.2	Identify planning requirements and develop implementation strategy time frames and accountability.	PDCYF	7/7/83	8/15/83	Completed
1.3	Identify action steps necessary for implementation schedule.	PDCYF	7/7/83	8/15/83	Completed
1.4	Prepare and distribute draft operational plan to districts.	PDCYF	7/7/83	8/15/83	Completed
1.4.1	Districts review draft operational plan and submit comments to PDCYF.	District	7/8/83	8/15/83	Completed
1.5	Revise and distribute final operational plan.	PDCYF	8/8/83	8/26/83	Completed
1.6	Provide technical assistance to districts.	PDCYF	Ongoing	Ongoing	Completed

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SENATE BILL 626 - HANDLING OF TROUBLED YOUTH
Revised August 18, 1983

ACTION STEP 2: District Administrator Selects the District Task Force

Activities	Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
2.1 District Administrator will appoint district task force members in accordance with Senate Bill 626, Section (3)(a)(b).	District Administrator	7/15/83	8/31/83	Completed
2.2 Conduct planning meetings with task force.	District Administrator	9/2/83	ongoing	

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SENATE BILL 626 - HANDLING OF TROUBLED YOUTH
Revised August 18, 1983

ACTION STEP 3: Prepare and Submit District Plan of Action

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
3.1	Conduct planning meeting with task force.	District Administrator	8/5/83	ongoing	Completed
3.2	Develop a written statement which defines task force operating procedures, individual responsibilities and a time schedule for meeting these responsibilies.	District Task Force	8/5/83	9/2/83	Completed
3.3	Study and prepare a written description of programs currently serving runaway children, and include information on the impact of programs cost-effectiveness and sources of funding.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.4	Develop procedures for the handling and referral for troubled youth and runaway youth using the least restrictive means.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.5	Develop provisions or procedures for contacting parents or legal guardians.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.6	Develop district statistics on target client groups, e.g., runaway and troubled youth.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed

ACTION STEP 3: Prepare and Submit District Plan of Action (Continued)

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
3.7	Develop funding formulas for runaway youth center.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.8	Develop recommended standards and goals for runaway shelters with emphasis placed on early implementation and aftercare.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9	Make recommendations in order that the department can establish standard services which can be monitored and evaluated. Emphasis should be placed on these services prior to a shelter receiving state funds. These services should include all formal and informal community services and not be limited to the following:	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.1	Programs for outreach and prevention for troubled youth and their families.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.2	Early intervention counseling services for troubled youth and their families with 24 hour access toward crisis or intervention.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.3	Temporary or short-term shelter food and clothing.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.4	Uniform and confidential intake and records system.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed

ACTION STEP 3: Prepare and Submit District Plan of Action (Continued)

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
3.9.5	Provision for aftercare including individual and family counseling.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.6	Programs for advocacy for client population and community support.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.7	Provision for case management and referral from service to service.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.8	Need to include medical (provisions) for defined groups.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed
3.9.9	Provision for educational needs.	District Task Force			
3.10	Each district will submit individual district plans for troubled and runaway youth on 8½ x 11 size paper, covering the topics in action steps 3.1 through 3.9. A total of 17 copies should be forwarded to PDCYF.	District Task Force	9/2/83	11/4/83	Completed

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SENATE BILL 626 - HANDLING OF TROUBLED YOUTH
Revised August 18, 1983

ACTION STEP 4: Development of the Statewide Plan by the Statewide Task Force

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
4.1	Appoint members of the statewide task force.	Secretary	8/1/83	8/22/83	Completed
4.2	Upon a specific request of a member or members of the Statewide Task Force, will provide technical assistance to districts as necessary.	Statewide Task Force	8/22/83	ongoing	Completed
4.3	Statewide Task Force will review district plans and recommendations for runaway and troubled youth.	Statewide Task Force	11/9/83	11/11/83	Completed
4.4	Statewide Task Force will make recommendations on how statewide plan will be developed.	Statewide Task Force	11/9/83	11/11/83	Completed
4.5	Final statewide plan submitted to PDCYF for printing and distribution.	PDCYF	12/1/83	1/4/83	Completed
4.6	Final report delivered to Governor, President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.	PDCYF	2/1/84	2/1/84	Pending

OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SENATE BILL 626 - HANDLING OF TROUBLED YOUTH
Revised August 18, 1983

ACTION STEP 5: Development of Administrative Rules for Runaway Shelters

Activities		Accountability	Beginning Date	Completion Date	Status
5.1	Develop draft rules and submit to districts for review and comment.	PDCYF	3/1/84	3/1/84	
5.2	Submit draft administrative rules to OSLS for review.	PDCYF	3/1/84	3/1/84	
5.3	Incorporate and revise as necessary district and OSLS comments on 10M-4.	PDCYF	3/23/84	4/6/84	
5.4	Submit administrative rules for review by PDCYF.	PDCYF	4/6/84	4/16/84	
5.5	Disseminate revised administrative rules to Headquarters for review: ASA, ASO, IG, and OSLS.	PDCYF	4/16/84	4/24/84	
5.6	Schedule tentative hearing date for administrative rules.	PDCYF	4/16/84	5/7/84	
5.7	Conduct/coordinate hearing on administrative rules.	PDCYF	5/7/84	5/7/84	
5.8	Submit administrative rules to Secretary for review.	PDCYF	5/18/84	5/18/84	
5.9	File administrative rule with Secretary of State.	PDCYF	5/23/84	5/23/84	

CHAPTER 3
Program Design

I. Philosophy

Based upon the needs assessment of the district plans it was shown that the highly populated areas of the state are in need of comprehensive runaway and youth crisis programs. It was also shown that many other areas in Florida are in need, but are without adequate service capabilities to address most, if not all, runaway and youth crisis problems.

Each county and each region having access to a full continuum of services to troubled youth and their families, as mandated in Senate Bill 626, serves as the foundational building block for the establishment of a statewide network of community-based programs. Geographical location of children and their families and of runaway programs throughout the state are important considerations in assuring quality and effective services for troubled youth.

II. Program Service Delivery Design

The task force agrees that the most cost-effective approach to resolving runaway or potential crisis situations is through prevention and early intervention. In an effort to meet these objectives and to insure that each region would have access to a full continuum of services, the task force is recommending the implementation of a centralized intake component as the nucleus of a two-tiered service delivery system.

It is further proposed that the two distinct levels of service be strategically located throughout the state taking into consideration location of existing programs, population factors, and so forth. These services in some cases may cross judicial circuits, HRS districts, and other lines to maximize program accessibility and quality of services, regardless of where the child and family may reside. Nevertheless, distinct geographical regions to house the two levels of service are recommended. Attachment #1 (see map) identifies each geographical region, recommended services and service locations.

III. Centralized Intake and Non-residential Service Programs

Central intake and non-residential service programs would be staffed with sufficient professional counselors to assume responsibility for receiving referrals, screening and assessment, crisis intervention, individual and family counseling, and facilitating placement of the child when necessary in voluntary crisis homes or in full service centers.

Central intake and non-residential programs would include the following services:

A. Outreach Services

B. Uniform and Confidential Screening and Referral

C. Case Management

D. Service Linkages

1) Service Needs - Assessment

2) Individual and Family Counseling

3) Crisis Intervention

4) Temporary Shelter

5) Aftercare

6) Service Accountability and Follow-up

E. Case Coordination

F. Transportation

IV. Description of Service Levels

A. Volunteer Crisis Homes

At present there is no statewide effort to develop, coordinate and adequately train crisis home volunteers who would make their homes available for very short or overnight placement of runaway children or other young people in crisis.

B. Full Service Residential Program

Based in the more densely populated areas of each geographic region, these comprehensive short-term residential programs with a capacity of between 6-24 beds would provide the following services:

- Community education and advocacy program
- Individual intake with 24-hour access
- Temporary shelter food and clothing
- Crisis and Early Intervention Counseling
- Peer Counseling
- Group and Family Counseling

- Education component
- Medical information gathering
- 24-hour awake supervision
- Aftercare and follow-up services

In addition to the above services, the full service program would be responsible for administering and coordinating services under its jurisdiction at every service level within that region. This would include all services provided under the central intake and non-residential service program as well as volunteer crisis homes.

CHAPTER 4
Program Standards and Goals

I. Purpose

This chapter contains the standards of service and program goals as mandated in Senate Bill 626. The department shall establish standard services for runaway youth centers which can be monitored and evaluated and the establishment of these services shall be a prerequisite to receiving state funds and shall include, but not be limited to the following.

II. Outreach/Community Awareness

Full Service centers through central intake and non-residential services shall conduct outreach efforts directed towards community agencies, youth, and parents.

A. The program shall conduct outreach efforts designed to provide visibility for the program with other community agencies, youth, parents, and other citizens.

B. The program shall serve as an advocate for improved youth programming in the community.

C. The program shall conduct specific efforts directed towards establishing working relationships with law enforcement and juvenile justice system personnel and other public and private agencies; and recruit, screen, train, and supervise volunteers who are direct program participants.

D. The program shall conduct prevention/education activities, i.e., peer counseling.

III. Individual Intake Process

The program, through central intake/non-residential services, shall conduct an individual intake process with each youth seeking services from the program.

A. Direct access to project services on a 24-hour basis. (Direct access by telephone does not include a message service, a hot line or other mechanism which provides youth with a telephone number to call or requires the youth to leave his/her telephone number and to wait for a return call.)

B. The identification of the emergency service needs of each youth and the provision of the appropriate services either directly or through referrals to community agencies and individuals. The development of formal referral agreements is preferable.

C. An explanation of the services which are available and the requirements for participation, and the securing of a voluntary commitment from each youth to participate in project services prior to admitting the youth into the program.

D. The recording of basic background information on each youth admitted into the program.

E. The assignment of primary responsibility to one staff member for coordinating the services provided to each youth.

IV. Early Intervention

The program shall provide early intervention counseling services for troubled youths, runaway youths, and their families with 24-hour access geared toward crisis or time of need and include the following services:

A. Individual and/or group counseling shall be available daily to each youth admitted into the center on a temporary basis and who requests such counseling.

B. Individual and/or group counseling shall be available to each youth on a non-residential or residential basis.

C. Family counseling shall be available to each family whose child is admitted on a residential or non-residential basis.

D. Individual, family and group counseling shall be provided by qualified staff.

E. Weekly case management sessions, involving appropriate program staff, shall be conducted to review current cases and the types of counseling which are being provided.

F. Appropriate mechanisms within the program shall be established and implemented to assure quality services and safeguard client rights.

V. Temporary and Short Term Shelter, Food and Clothing

The program shall provide temporary shelter, food

and clothing to each youth admitted into the project and requesting such services.

A. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall be in compliance with minimum state and local licensing requirements.

B. Only youth under 18 years of age or younger shall be eligible for temporary shelter.

C. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall accommodate no more than 24 youth at any given time.

D. Temporary shelter is normally not to be provided for a period exceeding two weeks

E. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall make at least three nutritious meals per day available to youth served on a temporary shelter basis. These meals shall meet USDA standards.

F. Qualified adult staff shall be on the premises, 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

G. The program shall establish a formal grievance mechanism to handle complaints of youth, volunteers, and staff.

VI. Uniform and Confidential Intake and Record Systems

A. On admission, program staff through central intake/ non-residential services shall start a record that identifies the youth and his or her immediate needs. During admission the following information shall be obtained:

1. Youth's immediate needs.

2. Name of the referral source, placing agency or individual.

3. Date and time of admission.

4. Reason for emergency placement (if residential).

5. Description of the youth's physical condition as observed during intake. Each intake counselor shall complete a medical checklist to ascertain if medical attention is required.

6. Documentation of youth's understanding of program expectations.

7. Child's feelings about the situation and program.

8. In residential admissions a voluntary inventory of personal belongings shall be documented.

9. Allergies to medication or food.

10. Medication the youth is taking.

B. The following information shall be obtained at admission or within 72 hours after admission:

1. Youth's identity.

2. Name and address of the youth's parents or custodian.

C. The program policies and procedures shall document which staff reviews admission information and makes admissions.

D. When a child is admitted, efforts shall be made to contact the child's parents or legal guardian within 24 hours. If the parents or legal guardian cannot be contacted, the program staff shall notify HRS of the child's presence. Efforts to contact the parents or legal guardian and contacts with agencies shall be documented in the child's case record.

E. The program shall provide orientation for new youths.

F. The client file maintained on each youth shall, at a minimum, include a CIS Facesheet deleting client's name and address and an intake form which minimally contains basic background information; psychosocial assessment, educational information, counseling notations; information on the services provided both directly and through referrals to community agencies and individuals; disposition date; and, as applicable, any follow-up and evaluation data which are compiled.

G. The file on each client shall be maintained by the program in a secure place and shall not be disclosed without the written permission of the client and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian except to program staff, to the funding agency(ies) and its (their) contractor(s), and to a court involved in the disposition of criminal charges against the youth.

H. Appropriate and necessary information should be entered into a statewide missing children information system and should be shared with other agencies on a

need-to-know basis. Information retrievable shall be accessible only to state licensed residential programs, although non-licensed facilities on runaway youth, if they so desire, may enter information.

VII. Provision for Aftercare and Follow-up Including Individuals and Family Counseling Services

A. Aftercare/Follow-up Services - The program, through central intake/non-residential services, shall provide a continuity of service to all youth served and their families.

1. Aftercare services shall be provided to local youth and their families either by the program or via referral on a voluntary basis.

2. Non-local youth shall be provided with a referral(s) to appropriate services in the youth's home area.

3. Aftercare counseling provided directly by the program shall be provided by staff with previous related experience and/or training.

4. Follow-up services will entail contacts with parents and/or legal custodian and child at 1, 3, and 6 month intervals after the child's termination from the program. Information shall be collected on the family situation, its progress or lack thereof. Information should also be collected on the child's subsequent involvement with HRS or other authorities.

VIII. Case Disposition

The program, through central intake/nonresidential services, shall determine, on an individual case basis, the disposition of each youth provided services and shall arrange for the safe arrival home of each youth or to an alternative living arrangement.

A. To the extent feasible, the program shall provide for the active involvement of the youth, the parent(s) or legal guardian, and staff in determining the auxiliary service needs of the youth/family and what living arrangements constitute the best interest of each youth.

B. The program shall arrange for the safe arrival of each youth home or to an alternative living arrangement, following the termination of the crisis services provided by the program.

The youth's case file shall reflect documentation of transportation arrangements.

C. The program shall verify the arrival of each youth who is not accompanied home or to an alternative living arrangement by the parent(s) or legal guardian, program staff or other agency staff, within 12 hours after his scheduled arrival at his destination.

D. Discharge planning begins at intake and targets designed outcomes. A discharge date shall be projected and discussed with the child. A discharge summary will document arrangements for transportation, referrals and follow-up.

IX. Procedures for Advocacy for Client Population and Community Support

A. Board of Directors/Advisory Body (Optional) - It is strongly recommended that the project have a board of directors or an advisory body which conforms to the following criteria.

1. The membership of the project's board of directors or advisory body shall be composed of a representative cross section of the community, including but not limited to youth, parents, and agency representatives.

2. The board of directors or advisory body shall review and approve the overall goals, objectives, and activities of the program on an annual basis.

3. Training shall be provided to the board of directors or advisory body and designed to orient the members to the goals, objectives, and activities of the project.

4. At a minimum, the board(s) shall meet on a quarterly basis.

5. The project's process shall be open to all paid and volunteer staff, youth, and members of the board of directors and/or advisory body.

B. Youth Advocacy

It is recommended that members of the board of directors, program directors and program staff serve as youth advocates on councils, task forces, professional and interagency groups in the community and regionally to promote recreational programs, social service programs and other services for youths.

X. Youth Participation/Advocacy

The program shall actively involve youth in the planning and evaluation of the services provided by the program.

A. At least two youths (ages 14-21) shall be members of the board of directors of the agency or members of the program's advisory body. If the program uses a board of directors governing body, the youth voting members shall be 18 - 21 years old and assume full governing responsibilities as other directors. Youth under 18 shall be ex officio members of a governing board.

B. A youth advisory group should be formed whose members may serve as peer counselors, recreation, and social service planners. Furthermore, this advisory group will serve as an advocacy body to promote the development of additional community youth recreation, counseling and social services.

XI. Provision of Case Management and Referral from Service to Service

A. All agencies shall cooperate with the management of cases and sharing of information. HRS mental health centers, law enforcement, court and community programs and other agencies shall coordinate service components and efforts to assure effective case management. Realistic caseloads for child and family serving agencies are a most important factor for quality service to families.

B. Weekly case review sessions, involving appropriate staff shall be conducted to review cases and the types of counseling provided.

C. The program, through central intake/non-residential services, shall establish and maintain linkages with community agencies and individuals for the provision of those services which are required by youth and their families but which are not provided directly by the program.

1. Arrangements shall be made with community agencies and individuals for the provision of alternative living arrangements, medical services, psychological services, psychiatric services, and the other assistance required by youth and their families which are not provided directly by the program.

2. Specific efforts shall be conducted by the program

directed toward establishing working relationships with law enforcement and other juvenile justice system personnel.

3. Formal or informal agreements shall be established with community agencies regarding the acceptance of program referrals.

4. The program shall document that referral for service is provided to each youth referred to a community agency. Program case files shall reflect documentation of appropriate referrals and service provision.

CHAPTER 5
Secure Shelter Issue

The task force decided to take up the issue of secure placement for chronic runaways in a separate section for the following reasons:

- Secure placement of runaways is an extremely controversial issue which has strong advocates both for and against.
- Several groups in the community including judges, law enforcement, and several from the district task forces feel that some form of secure placement is necessary in the case of chronic runaways.
- The task force would not be fulfilling its obligation to the Legislature if the issue of secure shelter was not addressed.

It is the firm belief of the majority of the statewide task force that if the recommendations made in this plan are fully carried out the chronic runaway problem would be reduced to a point that secure shelters would not be needed. It is therefore the recommendation of this task force that the plan as we have proposed be fully implemented.

After considerable discussion and disagreement on the issue of secure placement the task force finally agreed that we had neither the time nor the resources to come to a final conclusion as to the definitive need or lack of need for an immediate recommendation of a secure placement facility.

We initially discussed the possible secure placement alternatives. They were:

1) A secure shelter.

2) A secure room or wing within a shelter.

3) A separate wing within an existing detention center with an intensive counseling component that would include conditional release under intensive supervision.

4) Regular detention with a more limited and rigid time period than for delinquent children.

The least acceptable of these alternatives were (2) and (4) stated above. As to (4) it was reasoned that runaways should not be mingled with delinquents no matter how long the time period. As to (2) there was a strong feeling, particularly from those people on the task force who are in charge of shelters, that

runaways would stay away from a program where they felt it would be possible they would be locked in, and that this would cripple the outreach function of the plan.

Alternatives (1) and (3) as stated previously had more support. However, as to both sections it was felt that if either was adopted as part of the plan, the temptation would be to implement that program throughout the state using all monies that might be available for runaway youth and to forget about the rest of the plan. It was felt that this temptation would arise because of pressures from the judiciary and law enforcement to establish secure facilities. The task force agreed that the less restrictive rehabilitation oriented portions of the plan should be primary so their implementation could reduce, or eliminate, any need for secure placement.

The task force then considered whether it might not be useful to select one of the alternatives and propose a pilot program in one of the counties. The project would operate for one to two years and would be evaluated as to its effectiveness as a tool for working with chronic runaway youth.

When agreement could not be reached on a possible pilot project, we finally looked at whether there could be agreement on the need for secure placement. We did this by listing the arguments in favor of and against secure placement.

IN FAVOR

1) There exists a population of high risk and repeat status offenders who, for their own safety, need a safe shelter.

2) A secure placement will assist law enforcement and HRS by guaranteeing a place where a child can be brought that will assure the youth will not be out on the street immediately and again in danger or a burden to the community.

3) A secure placement would ease parental concern over the safety of their runaway child.

4) A secure shelter would guarantee time for appropriate personnel to assess, diagnose, and begin to treat the problems that cause the runaway behavior.

5) A secure placement could insure the child's participation in possible intensive counseling programs.

6) Judges will place runaways with delinquents in detention centers under their contempt powers if an alternative is not proposed.

AGAINST

1) Secure placements, no matter what kind, are expensive and not as cost-effective compared to other proposals in this plan.

2) In order to implement secure placements significant statutory changes would have to be made.

3) Secure placement of runaways violates federal mandate and the philosophy of the existing J.J.D.P.A. and could result in a loss of federal funds.

4) There is a higher risk of physical abuse by staff and clients in secure placement.

5) There would be strong potential for courts to abuse secure placement by placing the wrong children in the program and/or placing children there for the wrong reason.

This task force could not come to a consensus on the need for secure placement. We did agree that the present system of holding runaways in contempt and treating them as delinquents (holding them in secure detention with little to no treatment), is not an acceptable situation.

It is therefore our primary recommendation that the plan we have proposed be fully implemented and monitored so that the need for secure placements can be reconsidered in the future. It is felt that if the issue of secure placement must be considered now, it is our recommendation that:

1) A status offender program in Gainesville which diverts runaway youth from secure detention through conditional intensive counseling and supervision should be reviewed and considered. The program appears to be one that could successfully limit the number of children and the time spent in a secure placement thus making it a less restrictive alternative. The task force's concern about this type of program is the expense and the potential for abuse.

2) A pilot project which would allow secure placement for a runaway, tied with the above described non-secure intensive counseling should be considered. This could substantially reduce the number of dependent youth cited for contempt of court.

CHAPTER 6
Statewide Recommendations

Included in the following chapter is our statewide reccommendation. To implement our plan effectively the task force found it necessary to have a number of systems set in place.

I. Data Collection

Purpose

The immediate purpose of the data collection will be for use in statewide planning and budgeting. It is expected that when the more sophisticated CIS system is available and has the proper programming, that additional information can be obtained for the purpose of outcome evaluation.

The data collection plan and instrument shall be prepared and implemented by a committee composed of a CYF representative, a CYF data analysis representative, a runaway shelter administrator, and a runaway shelter program staff representative.

A. The information required will be:

1. Total number of referrals to each shelter.
2. Average length of stay in residential status.
3. Average length of service in non-residential status hours).
4. Average daily population.
5. Exit information (release, runaway, referral).
6. Referral source (self, police, HRS, other agency).
7. Runaway origin (in county, out county, out-of-state).
8. Services provided by shelter (counseling, crisis intervention, etc.).
9. Utilization (number of beds).
10. Client demographics.
11. Follow-up Information.

B. It is recommended that each shelter maintain additional data including outcome information and specify county of origin. The preparation and implementation, which shall include face-to-face training of the existing shelter peresonnel in its use, shall be completed by April 2, 1984.

The committee will insure that the information collected on each shelter shall be provided to each shelter on a six month basis. Those shelters which are not members of the Florida Network should be involved in this data collection process.

It is the intent of this task force that the above information be collected for all troubled youth who receive services described in the plan, including self-referrals. It is the desire of the task force that, for the purpose of planning and budgeting, statistics will be available as to all runaways whether in treatment or still missing. Therefore, the following steps shall be taken:

1. A CYF representative shall meet with representatives of the Missing Children Information Clearing House (MCIC) and the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC to provide input as to specific data these systems need to collect in relation to runaway children. Such data shall include, but not be limited to, how many children are reported missing by county in a six month period and the breakdown of the reports by age, sex, and race.

2. The MCIC and FCIC should be modified to, if possible, categorize the missing children reports into categories of runaway, physically handicapped, custody disputes and endangered/involuntary.

3. The above recommendations as to the specific data and the modifications in 1 and 2 that are needed shall be incorporated in a letter drafted by Children, Youth and Families, directed to Patrick J. Doyle of Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).

4. When the information requested above is available, it should be disseminated with the information obtained from the runaway shelter data by CYF every six months.

II. Monitoring and Evaluation

There is a monitoring and evaluation format already in existence for present runaway shelters (see attachment #2). This task force feels that certain additions and modifications need to be made.

A. The headquarters monitoring procedures shall include an on-site monitoring visit once every three years to each facility.

B. The district monitoring instrument shall be given to each shelter 30 days prior to district inspections. This shall be completed and returned by the shelter 15 days prior to the inspection.

C. The instructions for monitoring shall be expanded to address the direct interviewing of staff and clients and the numbers of each to be interviewed as well stated numbers of client records which should be directly reviewed.

To implement these recommendations and any additional modifications and additions, an ad hoc committee shall be established by October 1, 1984. It is to be composed of representatives from the headquarters Children, Youth and Families, Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, and the HRS Office of the Inspector General for the purpose of revising the existing monitoring and evaluation procedures for all runaway providers.

III. Training of Volunteers and Staff

Many programs serving runaway and troubled youth use volunteers to work individually with adolescents having difficulty at home or in school. Volunteers should receive regular training and should function under the close supervision of permanent program staff. This task force recommends that these volunteers be carefully screened before selection in the manner of operation used by exemplary volunteer programs, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, Inc.

A. There exists an overwhelming need to identify resource development and training capabilities for staff and volunteers in the state's runaway and youth crisis programs. This would be effectively accomplished through the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, Inc., a statewide association of runaway programs. We strongly endorse this concept based on the following points:

as regards legislative intent: that a continuum of services be required so that runaway youth and their families are assured the least restrictive alternative suitable to their needs and that the family unit is strengthened through the DEVELOPMENT, EXPANSION, and COORDINATION of various community-based services. Furthermore, the development of innovative approaches which have an impact on COST AVOIDANCE, COST-EFFECTIVENESS and PROGRAM EFFICIENCY shall be encouraged.

Presently, no coordinated, ongoing, and professionally staffed effort exists on a statewide basis to address the above issues through training and resource development.

2. Of the state's 12 runaway programs, nine are in part federally funded. For each of these a common denominator exists in that the goals of the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Public Law 93-415, as mandated by Section 315, include:

   a. meeting the needs of youth during the runaway incident;

   b. reuniting youth with their families and encouraging the resolution of family problems;

   c. strengthening family relationships and encouraging stable living goals for youth; and

   d. helping youth decide upon a future course of action.

To most effectively accomplish these goals, a well organized statewide approach to provide high quality training and technical assistance services to the Florida runaway shelters, both on an individual and collective basis, would be a critical step forward. This approach can be compared to similar services which are provided to the state's alcohol and drug abuse programs through the Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association.

B. As regards the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, the statewide association of runaway youth programs, the following is stated in the 1983 Evaluation of Florida Centers for Runaway Youth, Volume One, developed by Omni Systems, Inc.

"Associations of this kind are typically very valuable sources of training, management information and impending issues for members. This Network has focused the 1981-1983 period on legislative action. Most of its decisions and activities have recently related to plans and contingencies for future funding and survival. Perhaps because of the urgency of actions to assure the survival of its members the Network has placed other activities at much higher priority levels. For example, there is little evidence of conferences being devoted to staff development. In fact, direct service staff have rarely been involved in recent Network activities.

There is belief among some Network members that the association should (and could) be a more responsive source of management information, a role which would enhance the effectiveness of member centers. For example, a new center director should be able to obtain guidelines, suggestions, or examples for establishing better liaison with his own board. Another might expect his membership to afford him access to training materials for volunteers, or examples of good client case files. Unfortunately, while this type of sharing does occur occasionally, it is more a function of individual director's personal relationships than systematic information sharing sponsored by the Network."

Presently no staffing capabilities exist for either training or resource development through the Florida Network.

C. Resource development capabilities must be emphasized and separated at times from training in that when we discuss resource development we think of activities designed to enhance local center capabilities so as to attract new means of financial and other necessary support outside of state government. This concept can be applied on both a local level and statewide to assist in addressing the legislative intent issues of cost avoidance and cost-effectiveness as identified in Senate Bill 626.

It is the task force's recommendation that two statewide positions be established within the Network of Youth and Family Services. One will be responsible for the coordination of staff development and training and one responsible for resource development training and assistance. Costs should be considered for the salary of each position including fringe benefits, secretarial support and operating expenses such as the phone, travel, printing, and so forth. In addition, ten percent of one trainee's time should be allocated to data collection.

IV. Ongoing Monitoring

Crucial to the development of an efficient and cost-effective statewide continuum of services for runaway and troubled youth is an ongoing monitoring process. This should include follow-up advocacy for implementation of the recommendations to this task force as well as continued planning and evaluation of any future needs which may evolve in the years ahead.

This task force therefore recommends that an Ad Hoc Committee on Runaway and Troubled Youth (to be composed of, but not necessarily limited to, members of the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services and other program staff and administrators, HRS staff, and task force representatives) be appointed to meet at least every three years beginning in the year 1985 to evaluate implementation of task force recommendations and plan for any necessary action needed for future implementation.

V. District Contract Management

It is the task force's recommendation that additional Children, Youth and Family District Staff be created for the effective contract management of the systems recommended in the plan.

VI. Administrative Rules and Licensing Standards

The statewide task force strongly recommends that two members of the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, and two designated members of the statewide task force for troubled and runaway youth be involved in the formulation of the administrative rules and licensing regulations to assure consistency between this final plan and the rules and regulations of the CYF programs. It is further recommended that this joint meeting take place prior to June 30, 1984.

VII. Education Funding

The profile of the stereotypical runaway or potential runaway often includes problems in school. These problems may be curriculum based or behavior based. The bottom line is that these children need alternative education options. It has furthermore been clearly shown that there have been vast difficulties in regards to data collection and client projections.

In 1983, the Legislature amended the statutes dealing with special education, alternative education and vocational education caps. Currently, school districts set their own program cap by estimating the number of students in said programs that need to be educated for a specific school year. The task force concurs with the school districts' recommendation that the Legislature continue to allow each district to establish its own program caps

as determined by the districts FTE projection reports. However, if an additional number of students need to be educated the district presently receives zero funding for all students above the cap. Unfortunately, this formula penalizes the very students who desperately need the education and are entitled to it by both state and federal law. This task force strongly recommends that the Legislature provide full program funding for all students in said programs (refer to budget document).

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CHAPTER 7
Budget

Currently, $813,645 general revenue monies are appropriated to fund ten runaway shelter facilities in Florida. Assuming continuation funding, this amount would be deducted from our budget request. The budget in this plan is based on a network of 23 full service facilities averaging a 14 bed capacity. Based on information gathered from the 11 district-wide reports, population centers and geographic networking, the task force strongly believes these facilities should be located in specific counties and have as a minimum the bed capacities as outlined in Attachment 1 of this plan.

Full-Service Center

I. Personnel (Salaries and Benefits)	
A. Director's Office	
1. Executive Director (1)	$24,780
2. Program Evaluator (1)	17,700
3. Secretary (2)	23,600
B. Residential Component	
1. Program Director (1)	20,060
2. Counselors (2)	33,040
3. Cook (1.5)	17,700
4. Child Care Workers (7.5)	90,860
5. Maintenance (.25)	2,950
C. Non-Residential Component	
1. Program Director (1)	20,060
2. Counselors (4)	66,080
3. Volunteer Coordinator (1)	16,520
D. Total for Personnel	$333,350
II. Expenses	
Advertising	2,300
Communication & Postage	13,350
Drugs, Medical Expenses, & Educational Supplies	5,200
Office Expenses	9,155
Transportation & Auto Cost	12,100
Professional Fees	1,500
Conferences/Conventions	2,000
Food and Supplies	17,000
Subscriptions	250
Occupancy Expense	22,400
Printing & Reproduction	5,100
Volunteer Expenses	5,000
Workmen's Compensation	7,400
Total for Expense	$102,755
III. OCO	$7,600
Total for OCO	$7,600

IV. Summary

Personnel	$333,350
Expense	102,755
OCO	7,600
Cost Per Center	$443,705

V. Total Budget for Full-Service Centers

Each center would cost $443,705. There is a need for 23 centers. Therefore, the total cost for full statewide implementation would be $10,205,215.*

(*A full-service center will be expected to apply for federal and local funds to offset general revenue funds. It is expected that this will reduce the need for general revenue by 25 percent or $2,551,304.)

Statewide Training

As explained in Chapter Six of this document, there is a need for two trainers. It is estimated that the salaries, benefits, expenses, and OCO needs of each position would total $25,000. Therefore, the total need to cover training is $50,000.

CHAPTER 8
Conclusion

Through the implementation of this service delivery design, the vast majority of clients will have residential and counseling services close to their home with effective aftercare capability. Most of the children could continue attending their regular school system. Other local resources could be established and interfaced with the family as needed. Law enforcement and other referral sources would have a much more responsive adolescent resource.

This design also allows for a child from another region of the state to be more easily returned to a program closer to his home for services. IT VERY IMPORTANTLY ALLOWS FOR A UNIFORM CONTINUUM OF SERVICE. This cost-efficient approach would be designed for the less populated and more outlying areas of a region, that, nevertheless, experience families in crisis and runaway behavior. This service level would allow counselors to work with the child in the community, to better manage and coordinate services and to enhance the reunificiation of the child with the family.

It is proposed the central intake and non-residential service program staff assume the responsibility for recruiting, screening, training, supervising and providing supportive services to volunteers in the community who are willing to make their homes available for temporary placement, AS MANDATED IN SENATE BILL 626 AND YET MAINTAINS A CLEARLY DEFINED COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH.

The concept of central intake and non-residential services and the two levels of service delivery helps to defray administrative costs, but allows for community based accessibility. We propose that the service standards be reviewed with system networking of these two service designs as the prime consideration. The design of an effective continuum of services should be based on financial advantages. Any system established without these capabilities would be a "band-aid" approach to an ever increasing complex series of social problems.

Senate Bill 626 specifically recognizes the interrelation of problems of runaway and troubled youth with other specific issues such as child abuse, drug and alcohol abuse and criminal behavior. THE COST-EFFICIENCY OF EARLY INTERVENTION THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS IS FURTHER HIGHLIGHTED AS A PRIME REASON FOR A NETWORK OF ADOLESCENT SERVICES. Without such service capability taxpayers might bear the increasing costs of emergency shelter, foster care and long-term group living programs. The troubled youth may incur costs as a delinquent needing supervision and/or incarceration, eventually becoming an expensive resident of our adult correctional system. Program price tags, as published, do not take into consideration the cost

costs of HRS supervision, state attorneys, public defenders, judges, law enforcement, county hospitals and school systems, though lack of effective early intervention is apparent in every public office throughout the state. The actual costs involved in processing a child through all of these programs is astounding and ever-increasing.

Senate Bill 626 also recognizes that the state of Florida has a responsibility to provide services to "prevent and reduce the occurrence of runaway youth." This service delivery design is paramount to this end.

Bed Capacities as per Districtwide Reports,
Population Centers and Georgraphic Networking:

Escambia	- 10 Bed
Bay	- 10 Bed
Leon	- 10 Bed
Columbia	- 6 Bed
Alachua	- 10 Bed
Marion	- 12 Bed
Duval	- 20 Bed
Volusia	- 12 Bed
Pasco	- 10 Bed
Pinellas	- 20 Bed (2 10 Bed Facilities)
Hillsborough	- 20 Bed
Polk	- 10 Bed
Orange	- 16 Bed
Brevard	- 10 Bed
St. Lucie	- 12 Bed
Sarasota	- 10 Bed
Lee	- 10 Bed
Palm Beach	-24 Bed
Broward	-48 (2 24 Bed Facilities)
Dade	-40 (2 20 Bed Facilities)

Attachment 2

Runaway Monitoring and Evaluation Instrument

1. OUTREACH

The project shall conduct outreach efforts directed towards community agencies, youth, and parents.

a. The program shall conduct outreach efforts designed to provide visability for the program with other community agencies, youth, parents and other citizens.

b. The program shall serve as an advocate for improved youth programming in the community.

c. The program shall conduct specific efforts directed towards establishing working relationships with law enforcement and juvenile justice system personnel and other public and private agencies; and recruit, screen, train and supervise volunteers who are direct program participants.

2. INDIVIDUAL INTAKE PROCESS

The project shall conduct an individual intake process with each youth seeking services from the project. The individual intake process shall provide for:

a. Direct access to project services on a 24-hour basis.

b. The identification of the emergency service needs of each youth and the provision of the appropriate services either directly or through referrrals to community agencies and individuals.

c. An explanation of the services which are available and the requirements for participation, and the securing of a voluntary commitment from each youth to participate in project services prior to admitting the youth into the project.

d. The recording of basic background information on each youth admitted into the project.

e. The assignment of primary responsibility to one staff member for coordinating the service provided to each youth.

f. The contact of the parent(s) or legal guardian of each youth provided temporary shelter within the time frame established by state law or, in the absence of state

requirements, preferably within 24 hours but within no more than 72 hours following the youth's admission into the project.

3. TEMPORARY SHELTER

The project shall provide temporary shelter and food to each youth admitted into the project and requesting such services.

a. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall be in compliance with minimum state and local licensing requirements.

b. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall accommodate no more than 24 youth at any given time.

c. Temporary shelter shall normally not be provided for a period exceeding two weeks during a given stay at the project.

d. Each facility in which temporary shelter is provided shall make at least two meals per day available to youth served on a temporary shelter basis.

e. At least one adult shall be on the premises whenever youth are using each temporary shelter facility.

f. Each runaway shelter shall establish a formal grievance mechanism to handle complaints of youth, volunteers and staff.

4. INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELING

The project shall provide individual and/or group counseling to each youth admitted into the project.

a. Individual and/or group counseling shall be available daily to each youth admitted into the project on a temporary shelter basis and requesting such counseling.

b. Individual and/or group counseling shall be available to each youth admitted into the project on a non-residential basis and requesting such counseling.

c. Individual and/or group counseling shall be provided by qualified staff.

d. Weekly case management sessions, involving appropriate program staff, shall be conducted to review current cases and the types of counseling which are being provided.

5. FAMILY COUNSELING

The project shall make family counseling available to each parent or legal guardian and youth admitted into the project.

a. Family counseling shall be provided to each parent or legal guardian and youth admitted into the project and requesting such services.

b. The family counseling shall be provided by qualified staff.

c. The individual and/or group counseling shall be provided by qualified staff.

d. Weekly case management sessions, involving appropriate staff shall be conducted to review current cases and the types of counseling being provided.

6. SERVICE LINKAGES

The project shall establish and maintain linkages with community agencies and individuals for the provision of those services which are required by youth and/or their families but which are not provided directly by the project.

a. Arrangements shall be made with community agencies and individuals for the provision of alternative living arrangements, medical services, psychological and/or psychiatric services, and other assistance required by youth admitted into the project and by their families, which are not provided directly by the project.

b. Specific efforts shall be conducted by the project directed toward establishing working relationships with law enforcement and other juvenile justice system personnel.

c. Formal or informal agreements shall be established with community agencies regarding the acceptance of program referrals.

d. The program shall refer youth to community agencies for the provision of appropriate services.

e. The program shall document that referral for service is provided to each youth referred to a community agency. Center case files shall reflect documentation of appropriate referrals and service provision (e.g., medical).

7. AFTERCARE SERVICES

The project shall provide a continuity of services to all youth served on a temporary basis and their families following the termination of such temporary shelter both directly and through referrals to other agencies and individuals.

a. Aftercare services shall be provided to local youth and/or their families on a voluntary basis.

b. Aftercare services provided to non-local youth shall be referred to appropriate agency in the youth's home area on a voluntary basis.

c. Aftercare services provided directly by the program shall be provided by staff with previous related experience and/or training.

d. Weekly case management sessions, involving appropriate staff, shall be conducted to review current cases and the types of counseling being provided.

8. CASE DISPOSITION

The project shall determine, on an individual case basis, the disposition of each youth provided temporary shelter, and shall assure the safe arrival of each youth home or to an alternative living arrangement.

a. To the extent feasible, the project shall provide for the active involvement of the youth, the parent(s) or legal guardian, and the staff in determining what living arrangement constitutes the best interest of youth.

b. The procedures employed must assure safe arrival of the youth home or an alternative living arrangement. Each center shall provide or initiate transportation arrangements for local youth; and, each center shall provide arrangements for the meeting of youth returned home beyond the jurisdiction of the program by a responsible adult and for local transportation home. Youth case files shall reflect documentation of transportation arrangements.

c. The project shall verify the arrival of each youth who is not accompanied home or to an alternative living arrangement by the parent(s) or legal guardian, project staff or other agency staff within 12 hours after his/her scheduled arrival at his destination.

9. STAFFING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The project shall maintain a staffing and staff development plan.

a. The project shall operate under an affirmative action plan.

b. The project shall maintain a written staffing plan which

indicates the number of paid and volunteer staff in each job category.

c. The project shall maintain a written job description for each paid and volunteer staff function which describes both the major tasks to be performed and the qualifications required.

d. The project shall provide training to all paid and volunteer staff (including youth) in both the procedures employed by the project and in specific skill areas as determined by the project.

e. The project shall evaluate the performance of each paid and volunteer staff member on a regular basis.

f. Case supervision sessions, involving relevant project staff shall be conducted at least weekly to review current cases and the types of counseling and other services which are being provided.

10. YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The project shall actively involve youth in the design and delivery of services provided by the project.

a. Youth shall be involved in the ongoing planning efforts conducted by the project.

b. Youth shall be involved in the delivery of the services provided by the project.

11. INDIVIDUAL CLIENT FILES

The project shall maintain an individual file on each youth admitted into the project.

a. The client file maintained on each youth shall, at a minimum, include an intake form which minimally contains basic background information, counseling notations, information on the services provided both directly and through referrals to community agencies and individuals, disposition data, and, as applicable, any follow-up and evaluation data which are compiled by the project.

b. The file on each client shall be maintained by the project in a secure place and shall not be disclosed without the written permission of the client and his parent(s) or legal guardian except to project staff, to the funding agency(ies), and its (their) contractor(s), and to a court involved in the disposition of criminal charges against the youth.

12. ONGOING PROJECT PLANNING

The project shall develop a written plan at least annually.

a. At least annually, the project shall review both the crisis counseling, temporary shelter, and aftercare needs of the youth in the area served by the project and the existing services which are available to meet these needs.

b. The project shall conduct an ongoing evaluation of the impact of its services on the youth and families it serves.

c. At least annually, the project shall review and revise, as appropriate, its goals, objectives, and activities based upon the data generated through both the review of youth needs and existing services (12a) and the follow-up evaluations (12b).

d. The project's planning process shall be open to all paid and volunteer staff, youth, and members of the board of directors and/or advisory body.

13. BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ADVISORY BODY

The project shall have a board of directors or an advisory board which conforms to the following criteria.

a. The membership of the project's board of directors or advisory board shall be composed of a representative cross-section of the community, including youth, parents, and agency representatives.

b. Training shall be provided to the board of directors or advisory board designed to orient the members to the goals, objectives, and activities of the project.

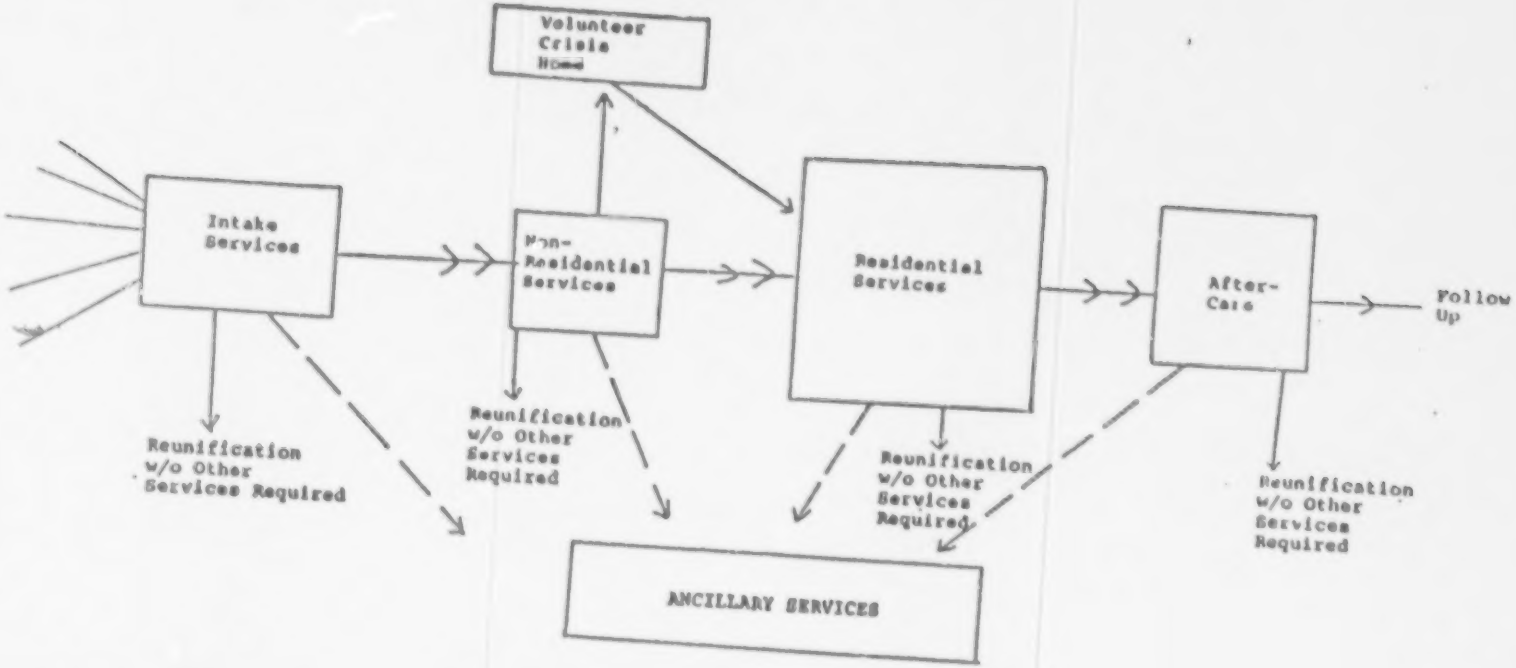
c. The board of directors or advisory board shall review and approve the overall goals, objectives, and activities of the project, including the written plan developed under 12.

d. At a minimum, the board(s) shall meet on a quarterly basis.

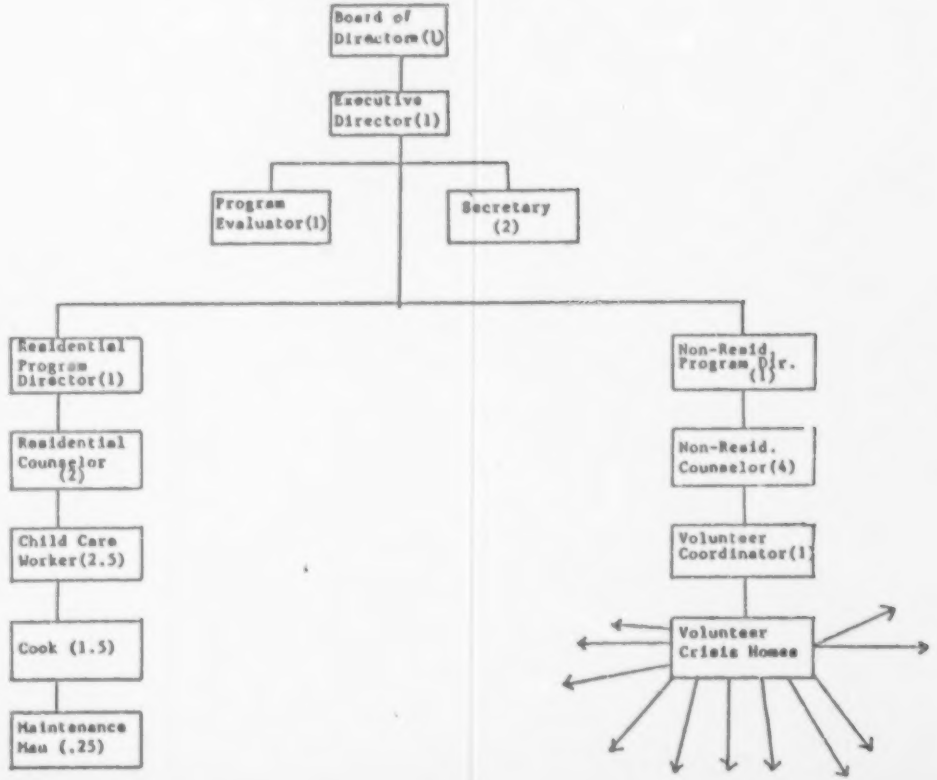
ATTACHMENT 3

RUNAWAY

CLIENT FLOW CHART



FULL SERVICE CENTER TABLE OF ORGANIZATION



Glossary of Terms

1) Runaway Child: A child who has left home, usually without custodial permission, but sometimes at the insistence of the custodian.

2) High Risk of Running Away: A child in crisis that could involve abuse or neglect, parent-child conflict, ungovernability, school problems or other conflicts that could lead a child to leave home or be thrown out.

3) Troubled youth: Children who are runaways or at high risk of running away.

4) Program: When referred to in this plan, program shall mean the continuum of service delivery.

5) Child: Any person under the age of 18.

6) Child who is found to be dependent: A child who, as stated in Statute 39.01 - Subsection 9, is found:

> To have been abandoned, abused or neglected by his parents or other custodians.
>
> To have been surrendered to the department, or a licensed child-placing agency for purpose of adoption.
>
> To have persistently run away from his parents or legal guardian.
>
> To be habitually truant from school while being subject to compulsory school attendance.
>
> To have persistently disobeyed the reasonable and lawful demands of his parents or other legal custodians and to be beyond their control.

7) Volunteer Crisis Home: A homelike facility, authorized by the Department of HRS for the temporary placement and care of troubled youth.

8) Ancillary Services: Services that are provided outside of a full-service center.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES' FINAL REPORT ON FLORIDA'S HOMELESS IS AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION DURING BUISINESS HOURS AT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR, SUBCOMMITEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES, AT 422 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of
Human Development Services

Administration for
Children, Youth and Families
Washington DC 20201

The Honorable Dale E. Kildee
Chairman, Committee on
Education and Labor
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I want you to know how much I enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk with you at the oversight hearing on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

We at the Administration for Children, Youth and Families are happy to provide responses to your additional questions. I hope you will feel free to contact me at any time in the future if I can be of further assistance.

Many thanks and warm regards.

Sincerely

Dodie

Dodie Livingston
COMMISSIONER

Enclosures

SEP - 5 1985

Responses to Questions
Raised by Dale E. Kildee, Chairman of
the Subcommittee on Human Resources
Committee on Education and Labor
Concerning Oversight Hearings on July 25, 1985

Question #1

Will the Department be renewing the contracts for the four bilingual multicultural resource centers in New York City, San Antonio, Denver and San Francisco which are scheduled to expire at the end of this fiscal year?

* If no, can you explain the basis for this administrative decision?

* How will the funds be redistributed?

* Will the Department make any additional assistance available to the local grantees who will now have to provide for their own bilingual training and program implementation needs?

Answer

A decision has been made not to refund the four bilingual multicultural resource centers when their contract expires in September 1985.

The decision not to refund the four resource centers was based on Head Start's Fiscal Year 1982 policy to decentralize the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) delivery system to make it more responsive to local grantee needs. One of the priority objectives of the decentralized system is to give more Head Start grantees responsibility for assuming control of T/TA resources through direct funding. Two hundred and ninety (290) Head Start bilingual trainers have now been trained throughout the country by the four Bilingual Multicultural Resource Centers, putting Head Start in a position to carry out the full intent of its 1982 policy to decentralize its T/TA system.

A new system of bilingual multicultural training for Head Start will be put in place. Under this new system, 35 exemplary Head Start grantees will be selected and funded to provide bilingual multicultural training to neighboring Head Start programs which would like assistance in implementing a bilingual multicultural program. The Resource Support Grantees (RSGs) in San Francisco, Dallas and New York City, which presently serve the highest percentage of Head Start grantees with bilingual children and who have responsibility for stimulating coordination and resource sharing among Head Start programs, will receive a limited increase in funds for the purpose of coordinating the training being provided by the exemplary grantees during the initial stages of this new system.

It is our intent to ensure that Head Start programs continue to receive quality bilingual multicultural T/TA support services.

Question 2

You stated that the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) has a good working relationship with the Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Could you provide some examples of coordination of policies and activities that have resulted from consultation between the two agencies?

Dr. Mastrapasqua stated that ACYF has been working with OJJDP on their proposed missing children's incidence study. Which ACYF personnel have been involved in this and what specific recommendations has ACYF made?

Answer

We are active members on the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice. We have worked jointly on several projects, including the development of a publication on State coordination of youth services; exchanged statistical data on our respective service populations; explored our mutual programmatic interests regarding missing and exploited children; and participated in OJJDP'S conference on drug abuse.

The principal ACYF staff members involved in making recommendations on OJJDP's missing children's incidence study are Dr. Raymond Collins and Dr. W. Raymond Rackley. The ACYF recommendations are as follows:

- expand the study database to the general population, not just law enforcement data sources;
- ensure that there are data on each age cohort (14-21);
- obtain more solid data on the numbers and location of homeless youth; and
- ensure the reliability of the data by having the Census Bureau conduct the study.

Question 3

The Department awarded 274 basic grants in fiscal 1985, a nine percent increase over the FY 1984 level. The number of basic grants funded in fiscal 1984 was a 16 percent increase over the fiscal 1983 level.

* How does the Department decide whether and how much to increase the number of shelters in a state?

* For each of these years, in how many states were the number of assisted shelters increased without an attendant increase in the respective state allotments?

* In a case where the Department is increasing the number of assisted shelters in a state without increasing the funding, what criteria is employed to decide which of the ongoing shelters will receive less funding and by what amounts?

Answer

In FY 1984, two States, New York and Michigan, experienced an increase in new grantees without an accompanying allocation increase. In FY 1985, nine States, Alabama, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and Puerto Rico, experienced an increase in new grantees without an overall allocation increase.

The Department decides to increase the number of shelters in a state, even in those states which did not receive increased funding, by considering several factors. These factors include the amount of an existing grantee's current grant, the need to provide shelter services in all areas of a State, including areas of high population density, the number of fundable applications received from a particular state, the level of support requested by each applicant, the total amount available under the State allocation and a desire to maintain some level of Federal funding for all current grantees who are performing well and have demonstrated the need for funds.

Question 4

There are some who claim that runaway shelters promote runaway behavior. The General Accounting Office found no evidence of this. What does the program information indicate?

Answer

Program information does not indicate that runaway shelters promote running away. On the contrary, we find that shelters help resolve the problems of troubled youth before they feel compelled to run away. The program data show that centers serve six times more youth on a drop-in basis for counseling and referral services than the number of youth who receive residential services.

Question 5

Have there been any reported incidents of child sexual abuse by the staffs of the HHS-supported runaway shelters?

Answer

To our knowledge, only two alleged incidents of child sexual abuse by staff of HHS-supported centers have been reported. In both cases, the charges were dropped after a thorough investigation conducted by the States, with involvement of and coordination with the regional office.

Question 6

What kind of data base does the Department have regarding the number and types of children being served?

Answer

The Department's data base on runaway and homeless youth is comprised of information provided by each of the grantees who agreed to participate in the voluntary reporting system. At the present time approximately 85% of the grantees report on a regular basis. We receive demographic and service information on each youth served which is then computerized and used to generate reports on various client charateristics.

Question 7

What does your data show about the numbers of children who need services but are not receiving them?

Answer

The present data base does not contain the types of information that would enable us to identify services that are needed but not received by the youth served by the HHS-funded shelters. However, we are in the process of developing a revised data collection approach which will give us more information regarding needed services.

Question 8

Do the numbers in your annual reports to Congress regarding how many children are being served represent a duplicated or unduplicated count?

Answer

The numbers in the annual report to Congress represent the number of youth served as reported through the voluntary system. This is an unduplicated count in the sense that no youth is being counted twice for the same service period. However, if a youth returns to the same shelter for a new episode or goes to a different shelter, this youth will be counted again in whatever category is appropriate.

Question 9

The 1984 amendments for the first time made for-profit agencies eligible to apply. How many for-profit organizations is the Department funding in Fiscal Year 1985?

Answer

No for-profit organizations are receiving funding in FY 1985 under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act because none applied.

Question 10

The Fiscal Year 1984 priority areas for research and demonstration grants were reuniting families, independent living, combating juvenile prostitution, and outreach to underserved youth at risk. Could you give us some examples of the outcomes of these projects and how information about them was distributed?

Answer

The research and demonstration efforts have been very successful in providing innovative and cost-effective service models for addressing the problems of juvenile prostitution, youth unemployment and strengthening families. The outcomes of the R&D efforts in these areas include:

- a case management and service coordination strategy, developed by a network of public and private agencies in Portland, Oregon, which has been very successful in extricating youth from the juvenile prostitution lifestyle;

- an improved statistical reporting system and knowledge base on juvenile prostitution, implemented in New York City and Seattle;

- a service model for improving collaboration between social services agencies, juvenile justice systems and the media, implemented by an organization in New York;

- effective community education and outreach materials to prevent the exploitation of at-risk youth, developed and disseminated by a shelter in Pennsylvania; and

- a mechanism for improving employment options for sheltered youth through public-private partnerships and the development of youth entrepreneurships in cities such as Washington, D.C., New York and Philadelphia.

These models and resource materials are periodically disseminated to grantees and interested organizations through cluster project briefings, technical assistance and training workshops, and service network activities sponsored by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB).

Question 11

In response to a question from the minority associate, it was stated that the Department does not plan to issue regulations implementing the 1984 amendments. Why is this not being done?

Answer

For the most part, the changes in the 1984 amendments were either technical, such as minor changes in phrasing, or were stated in a manner that requires minimum clarification. However, ACYF has initiated an updating of the regulations in certain areas where conformance to the amendments is needed. For example, in the technical area, the term "parents" is being replaced by "families"; and "entities" is being substituted for "non-profit agencies." Other 1984 amendments, i.e, the use of surplus Federal property and informational assistance to applicants, were discussed in the Federal Register program announcement of the availability of FY 1985 funds for center and networking grants on March 19, 1985.

Question 12

The law authorizes the Secretary to make grants for a period up to three years. What percentage of your grants are three-and two-year awards, respectively? How does the Department decide which length grant to award?

Answer

Presently all grants awarded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program have a one year project and budget period. We are planning to move to multi-year grant awards in FY 1986.

Question 13

The March 1985 program announcement provides that one of the criteria for making continuation awards is that the grant is in "the best interests of the federal government." What does this mean?

Answer

We were unable to find the phrase "the best interests of the federal government" in the March 19, 1985, program announcement. However, when this standard phraseology does appear in an announcement, it means that reviewers are to consider whether a grant application is responsive to the intent of the legislation and the priorities of the announcement, whether the work proposed comprises a sound, responsible program, in accord with the performance standards, whether the proposed management and financial systems are well-described and sound, whether the cost-benefit ratio of the program is favorable, and whether funds are in fact available to award to the program.

Question 14

The 1984 amendments added a new section 315 to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act which requires the Secretary to provide informational assistance to potential grantees.

* Is such assistance currently available? If so, on what basis? If not, why not?

* How has the Department advertised the availability of such assistance?

Answer

Informational assistance to potential grantees is available through several mechanisms including:

- the annual Federal Register program announcement, which provides detailed assistance on application requirements to prospective applicants; and

- ACYF Regional Office staff and FYSB Central Office staff who are available to provide technical assistance to prospective applicants and other interested parties.

The availability of such assistance is advertised primarily through the Federal Register and newsletters produced by State and regional networks of service providers.

Question 15

In your testimony you indicate that Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funds were awarded for 5 projects on shelter linkages to missing children. Could you tell us the impetus behind these awards and what types of projects are to be carried out?

Answer

Several years ago we began receiving information from our shelters regarding the lack of community awareness and local resources to address the problem of missing children. We believe that the problem of missing children is related to that of runaway and homeless youth. In FY 1985, ACYF funded five projects to establish and strengthen the expertise of shelters in planning and implementing community-based responses to missing youth. These projects will coordinate with other shelters, State agencies and newly established local programs for missing children to develop improved data bases for more accurate reporting, train shelter and other staff in appropriate referrals, improve responsiveness to parents and other concerned citizens, and avoid duplication of efforts by improving coordination at the local, State, and national levels.